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ABSTRACT

This Kids Count report presents statewide trends in the well-being of New Hampshire's children. The statistical report is based on 22 indicators of child well-being in 5 interrelated areas: (1) children and families (including child population, births, children living with single parent, and children experiencing parental divorce); (2) economic security (including child poverty, unemployment and wages, and children in families receiving public assistance); (3) health (including births to women lacking adequate prenatal care, low birthweight infants, births to teen mothers, substance abuse, and infant and child deaths); (4) safety (including abused and neglected children, youth violence, court-involved children, and out-of-home placements); and (5) education (including third- and tenth-grade academic proficiency, fourth-grade reading ability, high school dropout rate, and post-high school plans). Indicator data are analyzed at a level as local as possible. Each section includes discussion of needed information related to the area. The data indicate a dramatic correlation between child well-being and community economics. Rates were down for teen births, births with inadequate prenatal care, infant mortality, and mothers without high school degrees, with dramatic differences depending on the community economics. Rate of births to single mothers is climbing in all economic clusters. The number of people receiving public assistance has dropped, but there was a tremendous increase in child poverty. An unemployment equivalent index was calculated to capture the impact of very low wages on the community. Information on data sources completes the report. Appendix A delineates trends in the indicators from 1985 to 1996 and lists New Hampshire's national rank for 10 indicators. Appendix B provides a map of

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economic clusters with a list of towns in each cluster. Appendix C shows the grouping of high schools by economic cluster. (KB)

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KIDS COUNT

New Hampshire

2000

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is a statewide nonprofit, advocacy organization dedicated to making New Hampshire one of the best places anywhere for a child to grow up – a place where every child is valued and no child is left behind.

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KIDS COUNT
New Hampshire 2000

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Introduction

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." These words by Charles Dickens aptly describe the state of our children in New Hampshire at the beginning of the 21st Century. . . .

The best of times in that our children are living in a time of almost unprecedented economic growth. New Hampshire enjoys record unemployment levels. Average wages in the state have grown faster than inflation. And the rate of births to women lacking adequate prenatal care has been cut in half over the last decade.

But for too many of our children, it is also *the worst of times*. In this time of widespread prosperity, ten percent of our children–30,000 children– are living at levels below the official poverty line. From 1985 to 1996:

- the percentage of New Hampshire children living in poverty grew by twenty-five percent– a number that is particularly alarming given that the national percentage of children living in poverty dropped five percent during the same time period;
- the percentage of families with children headed by a single parent grew by forty-one percent in New Hampshire, three times faster than the national rate; and the percentage of children living with parents lacking full-time, year-round employment increased by fifteen percent, while nationally, the percentage dropped by eleven percent.[1]

What will happen to these New Hampshire children if we do not pay attention? The outcomes are serious and sobering: greater failure in school, higher crime rates, more drug and alcohol abuse, increased numbers of teen pregnancies, more unemployment, greater poverty, and huge costs to our state– socially, economically and morally. The consequences require us to address the problem today and to commit ourselves to long-term solutions.

The goal of *KIDS COUNT New Hampshire 2000* is to inform and impact the dialogue among the public and policymakers regarding our children and their health and well being. National data tells us that New Hampshire's children fare well in ten key areas relative to national averages. In this fifth volume of *KIDS COUNT New Hampshire*, we add to our understanding of New Hampshire children by exploring data on a community level in five interrelated areas: children and families, economic security, health, safety, and education.

This year, as in our *KIDS COUNT New Hampshire 1996* data book, we present data on as local a level as possible. Ideally, we analyze data on a town-by-town basis. Where that is not possible, we analyze data at the school district, court district or county level. Whenever possible, we explore the data through the lens of the five economic clusters first presented in our 1996 data book. These clusters, which group New Hampshire communities based upon their economic

environments rather than their geographical location, allow us to explore how child well being varies depending upon a child's residence in a wealthy or poor community. Appendix B provides a map of the economic clusters, together with a listing of towns in each cluster.

Appendix C shows the grouping of high schools by economic cluster– a grouping made challenging by the fact that many New Hampshire high schools serve multiple communities each from a different economic cluster.

What did we discover this year about our children? As in 1996, we found a dramatic correlation between child well being and community economics. For example:

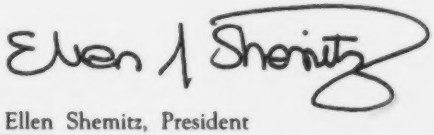
- We found that rates are down for teen births, births with inadequate prenatal care, infant mortality, and mothers without high school degrees, suggesting that prevention programs are having a positive impact. However, we also found that these rates are dramatically different depending on whether the community is wealthy or poor, and that the gap between the wealthiest and poorest communities is large and in many cases growing.
- We found that the rate of births to single mothers is climbing in all clusters, but it is three times higher to mothers from the poorest communities.
- We found that the number of people receiving public assistance has dropped in all economic clusters, but we also found a tremendous increase in child poverty. We need to ensure that *ending welfare as we know it* also ensures *ending child poverty as we know it.*
- We found that even in the midst of our strong economy, many communities are struggling with low wages that lag far behind average state wages. We present an *unemployment equivalent index* to capture the impact of such low wages on the community. The unemployment equivalent index measures the number of jobs which would need to pay zero wages, in order for aggregate wages to remain unchanged, with the remaining jobs paying state average wages. In some labor market areas, unemployment equivalent rates are over 50%.

There are signs of hope in even these troubling facts. We found that outcomes for children are not always preordained by the economic conditions in their communities. For example, in our analysis of education data, we found that while high school dropout rates tend to be higher in poorer communities, some schools in poor communities have low rates. Similarly, while rates for student plans to attend post-secondary education tend to be lower in poorer communities, some schools in poor communities have high rates. New Hampshire needs to explore what strategies are being used in such higher performing schools so that the lessons learned may be applied in other school districts.

What is the message we hope our readers will take from this data book? The best summary is *one in ten.* Nine out of ten of our children are living above the poverty level and thus are at reduced risk for health and developmental problems, school failure and subsequent un- or under-employment. However, *one in ten* of our children is living in poverty. *One in ten* is among the 30,000 New Hampshire children in need during this time of plenty.

Action is essential now. This year we have linked our *KIDS COUNT New Hampshire 2000* data book to an advocacy agenda: the *Children's Agenda 2000.* The *Children's Agenda 2000* is an action plan to improve child health and well being in the state. It was developed by a broad-based coalition of child service providers, child professionals and child advocates known as the New Hampshire Child Advocacy Network– NH CAN. References to the *Children's Agenda* in this data book are intended to support planning and action to improve the quality of life for all of the children of New Hampshire.[2]

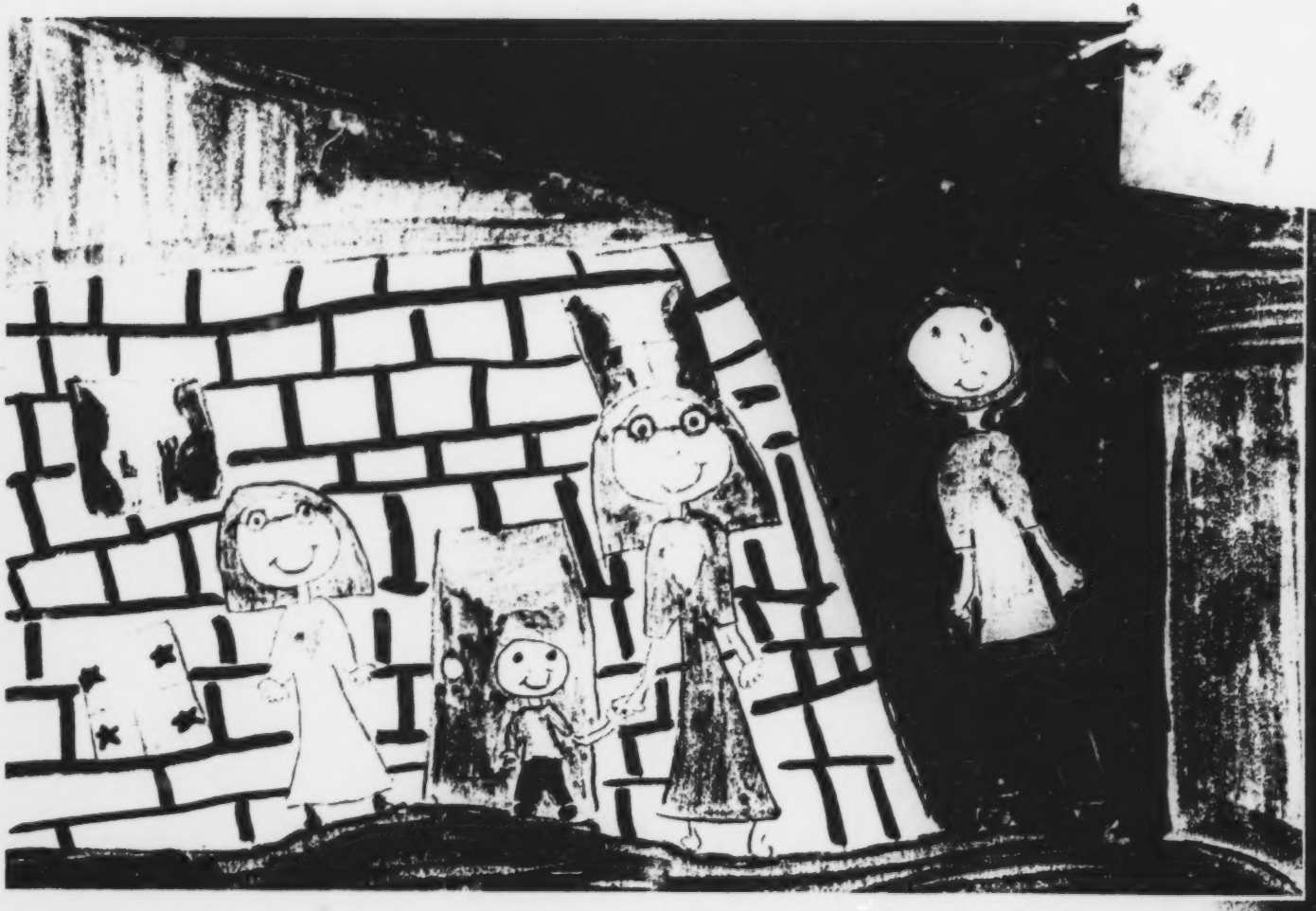
One final message in this book relates to the quality and availability of data in the state. Many times in our work on *KIDS COUNT New Hampshire 2000,* we were unable to obtain data elements we felt would be useful, even critically important, in understanding how children and youth are faring in New Hampshire. Some of the data didn't exist, some was not compiled in a usable form, and to our dismay, some data that had been easy to obtain in past years had become more difficult or impossible to obtain in 1999. At the end of each chapter of this data book, we have included a section on *What We Would Like to Know About Our Children.* These sections provide recommendations for a much-needed investment in data collection in our state.



Ellen Shemitz, President
Children's Alliance of New Hampshire
May, 2000

CHAPTER 1

Children &
Families



1.1 Child Population

Definition

Child population is the absolute number and percentage of the total state population under age 18.

Findings

In 1997, New Hampshire's 296,100 children comprised 26% of the total state population.[1] These children were evenly distributed among the five economic clusters of towns in the state.[2]

The New Hampshire child population is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. While 96% of our children are white, the nonwhite population is expected to grow significantly over the next decade. Indeed, projections are that the black and hispanic child populations will each grow by 21%, the asian and pacific islander child populations will grow by 30%, and the native american population will grow by 17% by the year 2005.[3]

As the race and ethnicity of our children change, so do the demographics of the population at large. Children are becoming a smaller percentage of our state population. Although the absolute numbers are not expected to change much from 1995-2020, the projected increase of 14,000 children (4.8%) compares to projected increases of all adults by 247,000 (29.0%), adults 65-74 by 61,000 (81.3%), and adults 75 and older by 32,000 (51.7%).

Figures 1-1, 1-2, and 1-3 display the percentages of the state's population that were children in 1970 and 1995, and the projections for 2020.[4]

Figure 1-1 Percent of 1970 New Hampshire Population

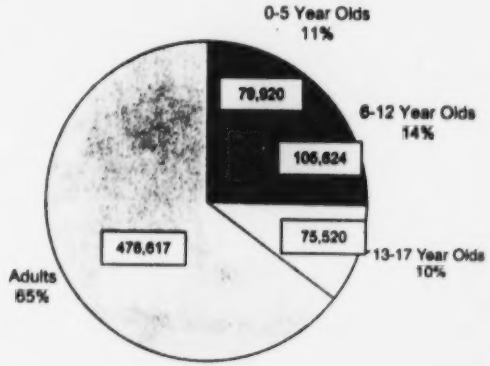
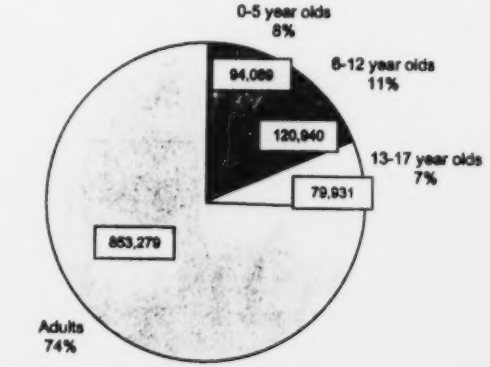
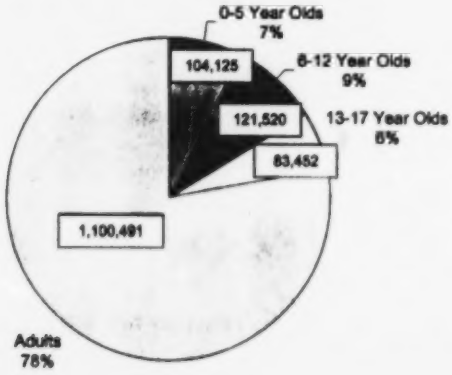


Figure 1-2 Percent of 1995 New Hampshire Population



One generation ago, in 1970, children age 0-17 constituted more than one-third of the population. Today children constitute one-quarter of the population. By 2020, children will constitute only slightly more than one-fifth of the population.

Figure 1-3 Percent of Projected 2020 New Hampshire Population



Significance

Although a shift in the demographics of the state means a decline in children as a percentage of the total population, the total number of children continues to grow. This means a growing demand for existing support services and a need for continued investment in local and state infrastructures for children and families.

Recommendations for specific action set forth in the *Children's Agenda 2000* include:

- Increased interagency collaboration to meet the needs of children;
- Provision of necessary funding for child and family support services;
- Creation of and support for community based programs and resources for children and youth;
- Opening community buildings, including school buildings, to child and youth activities.

Whatever the proportion of children to the general population, their well being is vital to the well being of every community in the state. The public and private sectors need to be vigilant that, as children become a smaller percentage of the population, their needs do not receive less attention and fewer resources. Failure to support our children today would have a negative impact on the quality of all of our lives and could translate into higher costs in the future as children with unmet needs age into adults who may be unprepared to meet the social, educational, and economic challenges of the next decades.

1.2 Child Births

Definition

Child births count the absolute number of live births to New Hampshire residents.

Findings

The total number of births to New Hampshire women has fallen in recent years. In 1989, the number of births reached a peak of 17,801. That number has decreased each subsequent year until 1997, when there were 14,275 births to New Hampshire women.

Child births in New Hampshire have contributed significantly to the population increase over the last decade.[5] Figure 1-4 displays the number of births beginning in 1970.[6]

Figure 1-4 Births to New Hampshire Mothers 1970-1997

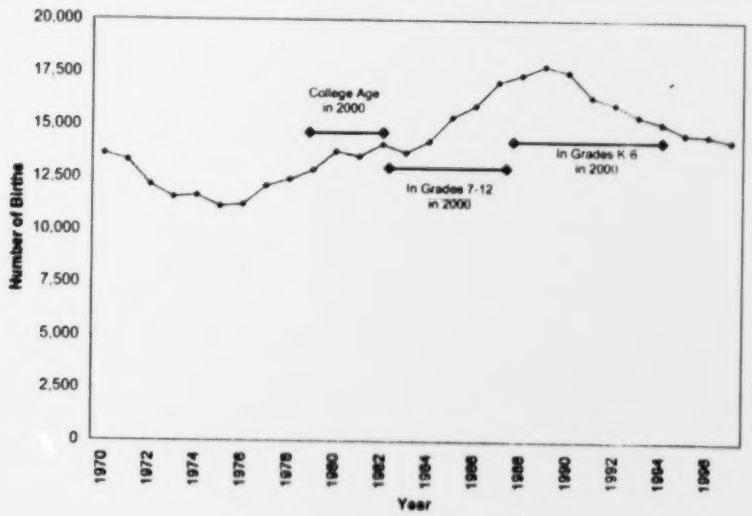


Figure 1-4 also displays, as horizontal lines, the current school-year placement of children born in the last twenty years. Children born in New Hampshire in the peak year of 1989 entered fifth grade in the fall of 1999. The decline in births after 1989 means that the total number of children enrolling in early school grades has begun to decline and will continue to do so for at least the next few years. Junior high schools and middle schools, however, have just begun to see the larger numbers born in the late 1980s. Increases in high school enrollments will continue for the next three or four years before beginning to level off.

Significance

Because births are by far the largest contributor to the population of children, trends in births can provide insight into future needs, particularly with respect to the demand for education services. In New Hampshire, elementary school enrollments are declining, while enrollments in middle and high school are increasing.

With a growing number of children attending secondary schools, additional resources need to be devoted by both the public and the private sector to support New Hampshire youth.

To ensure that all of the children in our state have the opportunity to receive an adequate education, the *Children's Agenda 2000* calls for full funding of the current educational funding law and support of the constitutional right of all students to an adequate education.

1.3 Children Living With Single Parent

Definition

Children living with single parent counts the number and percentage of children under age 18 who live in families headed by one parent, either father or mother, without a spouse present in the home.

Findings

Over the past decade, New Hampshire has seen a substantial increase in the percentage of children living with a single parent, from 16.5% in 1988 to 24% in 1996. This change follows a national increase from 23% in 1988 to 27% in 1996. The Center for Demographic Policy in Washington, D.C. estimates that 60% of all children in the country will spend some part of their childhood in a single-parent family.[7]

Figure 1-5 shows the percentage growth of families with children headed by a single parent in New Hampshire compared to the national percentage growth over the same time period.[8] Historically, New Hampshire has been one of the states with the lowest proportion of children in single parent households. But the gap between the national average and New Hampshire is narrowing.

Growth in single-parent families may be attributed in part to births to unmarried women. The numbers and percentage of live births to women not married at the time of delivery has risen dramatically over the last twenty years. In 1970, such births constituted only 6.5% of all births in the state. By 1997, this number had risen to 26.8%.[9]

The rate at which children are born to single mothers is directly related to the economic condition of the communities in which the mother lives, as shown in Figure 1-6.[10] Approximately 1 in 3 births in the poorest cluster of towns are to single mothers, versus 1 in 9 births to single mothers in the wealthiest cluster of towns. This difference in birth rates between clusters has grown wider over the last 27 years.

The higher incidence of births to single mothers in poor versus wealthy communities threatens to perpetuate the cycle of poverty.

Figure 1-5 Percentage of Families with Children Headed by a Single Parent

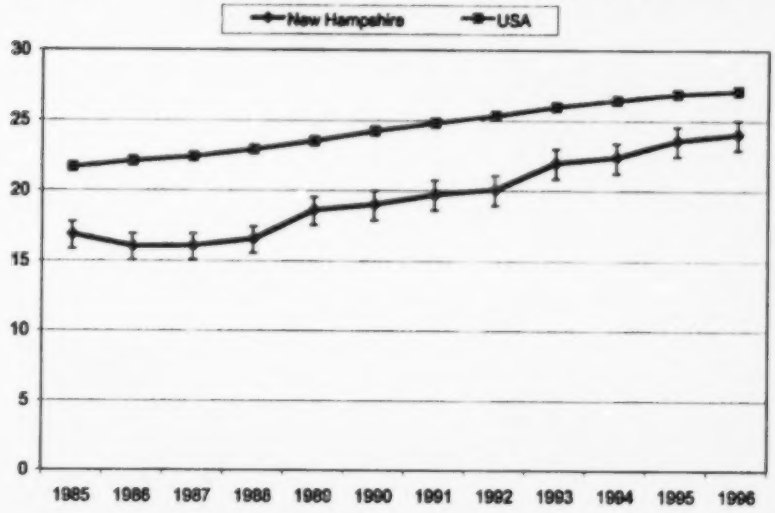
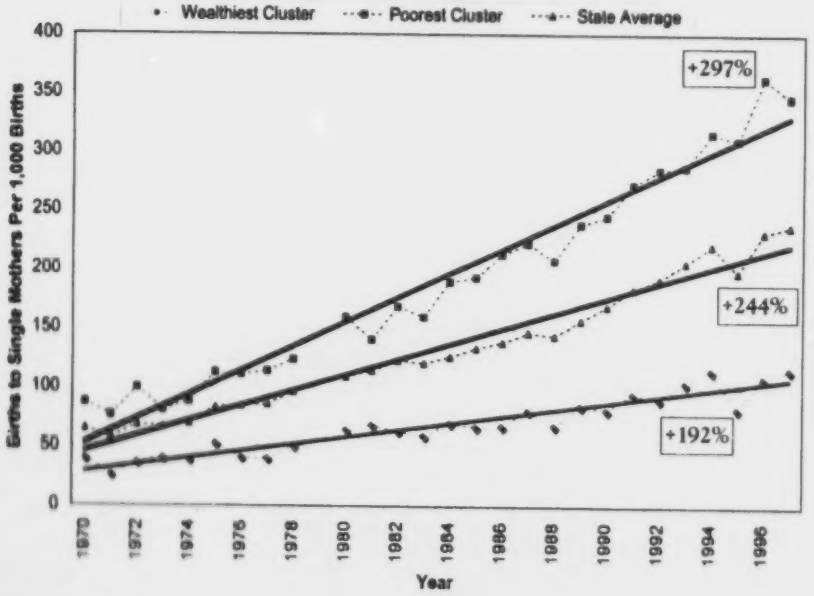


Figure 1-6 Births to Single Mothers by Town Economic Cluster 1970-1997



Significance

Single-parent families may exist for many different reasons– divorce or separation, death of a parent, or birth or adoption by a single parent. Regardless of the cause, the children of these families share certain characteristics. Statistically, children living in single-parent families are more likely to live in poverty than children from two-parent households.[11] For children living in families headed by women, the risk of poverty is even greater.[12]

In 1999, the national *KIDS COUNT* data book listed the absence of a parent as one of six indicators closely correlated to children at high risk. Children who have four or more of the six listed indicators– the absence of a parent, parent education level below high school, family living below poverty level, parents lacking steady, full-time employment, family receiving welfare benefits, and child lacking health insurance– are vulnerable to school and economic failure. Indeed, a child growing up in a single-parent family who also meets three of the other criteria is:

- two times *more* likely as a four-year-old to have difficulty concentrating as a child of the same age group from a family with no risk factors;
- three times *more* likely as a four-year-old to have difficulty communicating as a child of the same age group from a family with no risk factors;
- five times *less* likely as a four-year-old to have very good health as a child of the same age group from a family with no risk factors;
- twenty-six times *more* likely as a 16-19-year-old to become a high school drop out as a child of the same age group from a family with no risk factors;
- one-hundred-and-sixty times *more* likely as a teenage female, age 15-19, to become a teen mother as a female of the same age from a family with no risk factors.[13]

From 1988 to 1996, New Hampshire saw a 45% increase in the percentage of children living with a single parent, compared to a 17% increase nationwide.[14]

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1.4 Children Experiencing Divorce of Parents

Definition

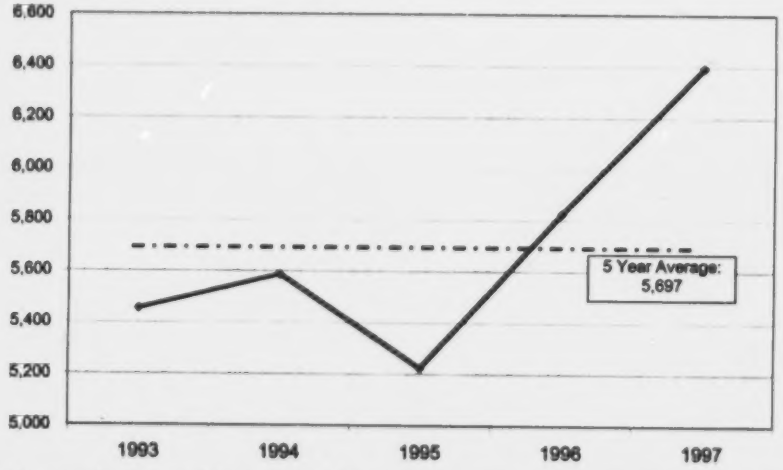
Children experiencing divorce of parents are children under age 18 whose parents are divorced at least once during their childhood.

Findings

From 1993 through 1997, 15,728 divorce decrees were issued in New Hampshire, involving 28,484 minor children– an average of 5,700 children each year.[15]

Figure 1-7 depicts the divorce rate in New Hampshire during 1993-95.

Figure 1-7 Children Experiencing Divorce of Parents



If the number of children affected by divorce were to remain constant (with about 5,700 children affected each year), and no child experienced more than one divorce, approximately 32% of the state's children would experience the divorce of their parents before turning 18.

This estimate varies by county, as shown in Table 1-1. Children living in Belknap County have the highest risk of experiencing divorce before adulthood (45%), while children living in Rockingham County have the lowest risk (28%).

Table 1-1 Children of Divorce by County

County	Children 0-17 Involved in Divorces 1993-1997	Children 0-17 in 1995	% of Children Who May Be Involved in a Divorce Before Age 18
Belknap	1,676	13,482	45%
Carroll	989	10,286	35%
Cheshire	1,908	19,464	35%
Coos	820	8,392	35%
Grafton	2,102	20,832	36%
Hillsborough	7,966	100,063	29%
Merrimack	3,449	34,584	36%
Rockingham	5,747	75,190	28%
Strafford	2,735	30,995	32%
Sullivan	1,092	10,252	38%
New Hampshire	28,484	323,541	32%

The divorce rate also varies by economic cluster. In our *KIDS COUNT New Hampshire 1996 Data Book*, we reported that children living in the state's poorest communities were more likely than children in wealthier towns to experience the divorce of their parents. Table 1-2 contains the numbers and percent of children in each cluster who experienced divorce from 1990-1994.[16]

Table 1-2 Children Experiencing Divorce by Economic Cluster

	1 Wealthiest	2	3 Middle	4	5 Poorest	Total
Children Experiencing Divorce 1990-1994	4,428	4,171	5,042	5,139	5,180	23,960
% Children	6.3%	7.7%	8.7%	9.6%	10.5%	8.6%

Finally, it is important to note that, as seen in Figure 1-7, the divorce rate has increased over the past two years for which data are available, after remaining relatively constant during 1993-1995. The number of divorces granted in 1997 was 19% higher than in 1995, and the number of children involved had

increased 22% to 6,394. Close attention should be paid to these figures in future years. If the number of children affected annually remains above the 5,700 level, the estimates of 32% of all children experiencing the divorce of their parents before age 18 will prove to be too low.

Significance

Divorce has a significant impact on children. On a short-term basis, children are more likely to experience elevated stress levels, increased illness, depression, and withdrawal.[17] While such effects are generally not seen one or two years after divorce, there may be longer-term consequences. Studies show more truancy, poorer school work, and an increase in antisocial behavior in children of divorce compared to children of intact families.[18]

The age of the child at the time of divorce is relevant, too: younger children apparently exhibit fewer of the negative effects of divorce than older children, who may have greater awareness of changes in social and economic status.[19] Nationally, teens that have lived apart from one of their parents during some period of their childhood are at greater risk than teens that grow up with both parents, regardless of race or maternal education. Teens of divorce are:

- twice as likely to drop out of school;
- twice as likely to have a child before age 20;
- one-and-a-half times more likely to be out of school and out of work in their teens and early twenties.[20]

While these statistics give us pause, there are hopeful factors that appear to influence those teens that thrive in single-parent homes. These teens report more often than their counterparts that they feel support from their families, friends, communities, and schools. The difference between teens who thrive in single-parent homes and those who do not may lie in positive family support systems, quality schools, friends who are positive influences, involvement in extracurricular activities, and involvement in religious institutions.[21]

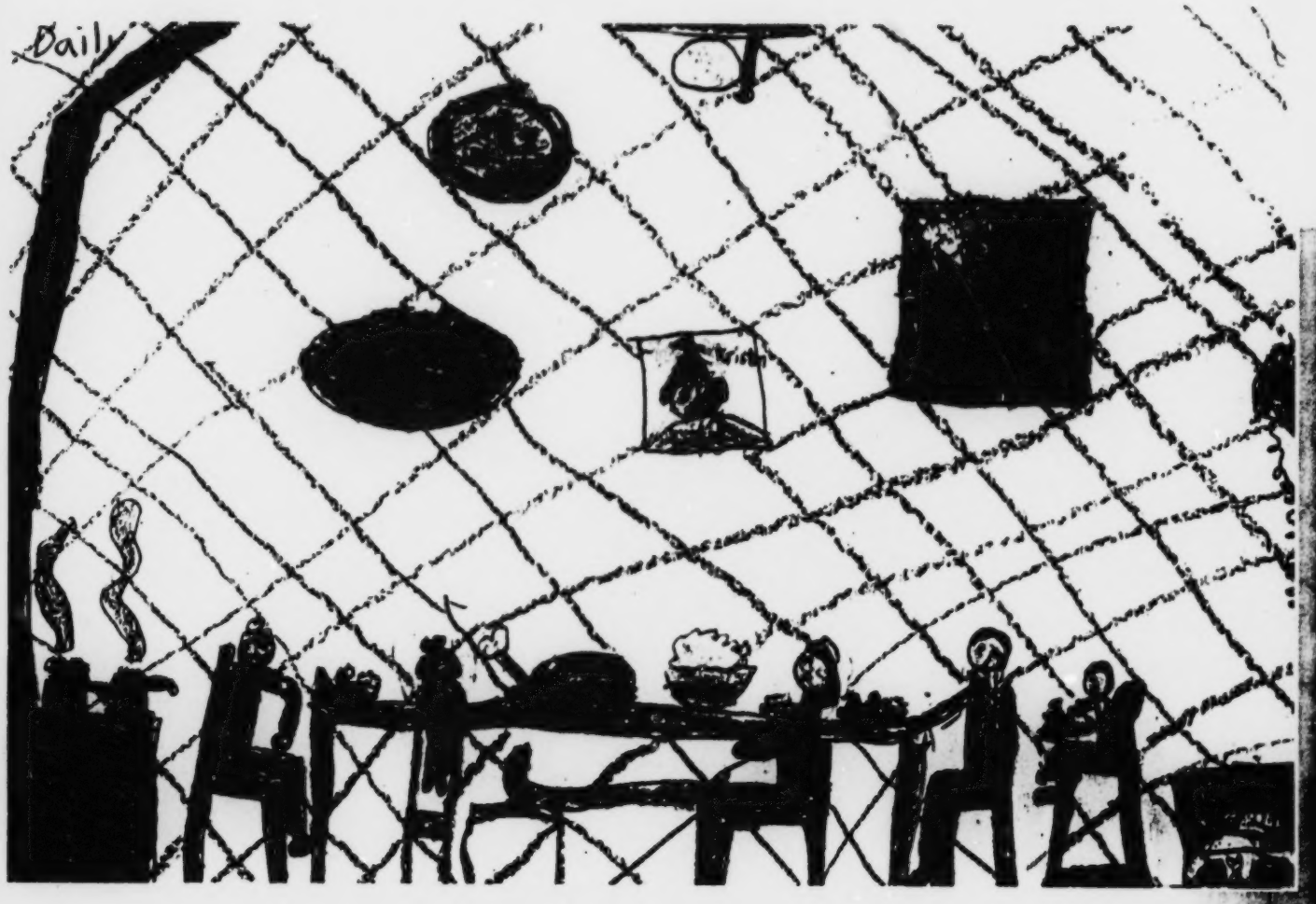
1.5 What We Would Like to Know About Our Children and Families

KIDS COUNT New Hampshire and the Children's Alliance of New Hampshire have a goal of providing as complete and accurate a portrait of child well being as possible. To that end, this section sets out current data limitations that need to be addressed in order to ensure that state policy is based on a comprehensive and detailed understanding of the needs of our children, families, and communities.

Our first suggestion involves the *current population survey*. Much of *KIDS COUNT* data is drawn from the U.S. Census. The 1990 census figures are now ten years old, and results of the 2000 census will not be available until 2002 or later. The Current Population Survey completed annually by the Census Bureau could provide much more useful interim information for New Hampshire if the sample size used in this state was larger. The current sample is too small to draw conclusions about annual trends in poverty, family size and composition, income, and other factors. It is also too small to allow for any sub-state regional, county, or cluster comparisons. This could be rectified. The state could implement an identical survey annually, using the same instrument that the Census Bureau uses, or could even contract with the Census Bureau or the University of New Hampshire Survey Center for a larger sample to be taken in this state. Such a tool would allow reasonable annual updating of important demographic and economic indicators. Trends, both positive and negative, could be ascertained early. Differences among regions and larger communities could result in better targeting of programs and policies.

Our second suggestion lies in the area of *divorce statistics*. Current data limitations made it impossible to analyze divorce by economic cluster for *KIDS COUNT New Hampshire 2000*. The residence of children involved in divorce cases is recorded at the county probate courts where the cases are filed. In the past, the state collected that information for statistical research; however, it has discontinued that practice. Because each of the ten counties contains many different types of communities– including urban, rural, and suburban– using county level aggregates masks any relationship that might exist among community economics, demographics, and divorce. Town-level data would allow these relationships to be explored as was done in the *KIDS COUNT New Hampshire 1996 Data Book*, and for any changes to be tracked over time. The state should return to its prior practice of collecting and making this information available.

CHAPTER 2
Economic Security



2.1 Children Living in Poverty

Definition

Children living in poverty are the number and percentage of children living in families whose annual income is below the official federal "poverty threshold."

Findings

Child poverty in New Hampshire is on the rise. From 1986 to 1996, the percentage of children living in poverty in the state grew by 25%, as shown in Figure 2-1.[1] By 1996, the most recent year for which reliable data are available, approximately 30,000 children– 10.2% of our child population– were living in poverty.[2]

Figure 2-1 Percent of New Hampshire Children in Poverty

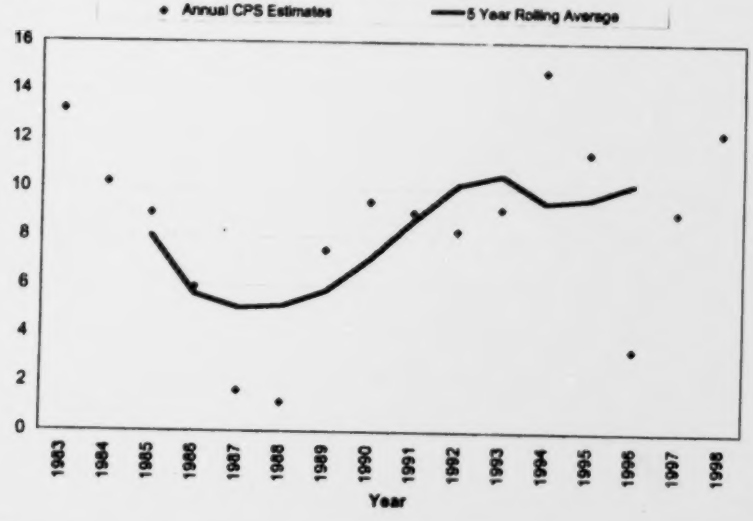


Figure 2-1 undercounts the number of poor children in the state. The graph is based on the federal poverty threshold, which understates the real need of children and families based on the cost-of-living in New Hampshire. The NH Department of Health and Human Services publishes an annual Standard of Need that attempts to measure the true costs of raising children in New Hampshire.[3] Table 2-1 compares the Census poverty threshold and the state's Standard of Need:

Table 2-1 Census Poverty Threshold v. NH Standard of Need

Size of Family Unit	1998 Census Bureau Preliminary Poverty Threshold	1999 NH H&HS Standard of Need	NH Standard of Need as % of Poverty Guidlines
1	$8,310	$14,100	170%
2	$10,973	$18,480	168%
3	$13,001	$22,992	177%
4	$16,655	$27,108	163%
5	$19,682	$31,032	158%
6	$22,227	$36,336	163%
7	$25,188	$40,452	161%
8	$28,023	$46,536	166%

The table shows that a family would need an income of about 165% of the federal definition of poverty in order to cover "the actual costs involved in bringing up a New Hampshire family at a minimum level of adequacy and decency."[4]

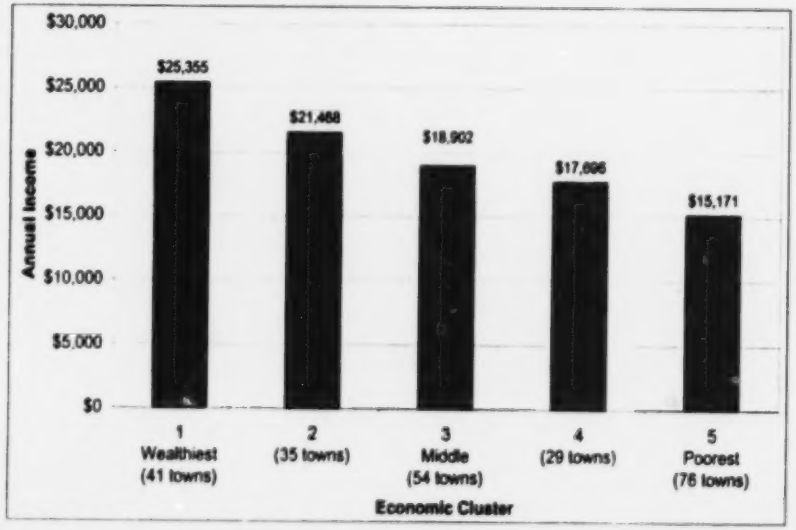
How many children, then, are living at levels below minimum adequacy and decency? Unfortunately, the Census Bureau Current Population Survey does not collect information that allows for an actual estimate to be made. We do know the number would be significantly higher than the current estimate of 30,000.

We also know that the poor children living in our state are not equally distributed across our towns and cities. Although the limitations of the Current Population Survey (CPS) do not allow an update of the 1996 KIDS COUNT report on poverty by economic cluster, data on per capita income (PCI) provides insight into the relative economic well being of communities.

From 1989 to 1996, per capita income rose by $3,698– an increase of 18.8% from $15,959 to $19,657. Adjusted per capita income varied significantly among the different economic clusters in the state, as shown in the Figure 2-2.[5]

PCI varies by approximately $10,000 or 67% from the wealthiest to the poorest economic cluster in the state.

Figure 2-2 1996 Adjusted Per Capita Income



Significance

The 25% increase in the percentage of children living in poverty in New Hampshire starkly contrasts with a national decrease of 5% over the same time period.[6] Far too many children in New Hampshire are poor or extremely poor, and the trend is moving in the wrong direction.

Poverty poses a grave threat to child health and well being. Children growing up in poverty, especially extreme poverty, are far more likely to experience health and developmental problems, which influence their school readiness, social skills and, later, their employment potential.[7]

Child poverty poses a threat not only to the child, but also to the greater community. Poor children are one-third less likely to attend a two- or a four- year college than non-poor children and are half as likely to earn a bachelor's degree.[8] These children face a lifetime of lower wages and earning capacity. Today's children are tomorrow's leaders and workers. When we invest in our children, we invest in our state's economic future.

Ending child poverty should be one of the highest priorities of local, state, and federal government and of the private sector. A successful agenda to end child poverty should include tools to enable families to achieve economic self-sufficiency, such as fair wages, education, and job training as well as measures to ensure an adequate safety net for families. The *Children's Agenda 2000* calls for a number of concrete action steps in this area, including:

- Raising the minimum wage in New Hampshire;
- Creating rental assistance support programs in the state;
- Expanding unemployment insurance to cover part-time workers;
- Allowing TANF funds to be spent on post-secondary education so that low-income parents have an opportunity to obtain better paying jobs with health insurance.

A focus on child care – particularly for low-income families – is also critical. Low-income families spend an average of 25% of their earnings on child care in contrast to average-income families that spend an average of 18%.[9] Many families cannot access quality, affordable child care – a problem that continues to grow with our low unemployment rate. For many working parents, high quality child care dictates ability to work. Indeed, in New Hampshire last year, businesses are estimated to have lost up to $24 million due to child care related absenteeism.[10]

The sheer number of children in child care demands attention. In 1997, 44% of New Hampshire children age 16 or younger (121,317 children) were in child care during the school year, and nearly three-fifths of preschool children (55,424 preschool children) were in child care.[11] Given the impact of a child's daily environment on cognitive capacity, we need to ensure that all children have access to care appropriate to their ages and developmental levels.

The percentage of children living in poverty in New Hampshire has increased by 25% over the last decade, in contrast to a 5% decline nationwide.[12]

The number of children living with parents lacking full-time, year-round employment has increased by 15% over the last decade, in contrast to an 11% decline nationwide.[13]

2.2 Unemployment and Wages

Definition

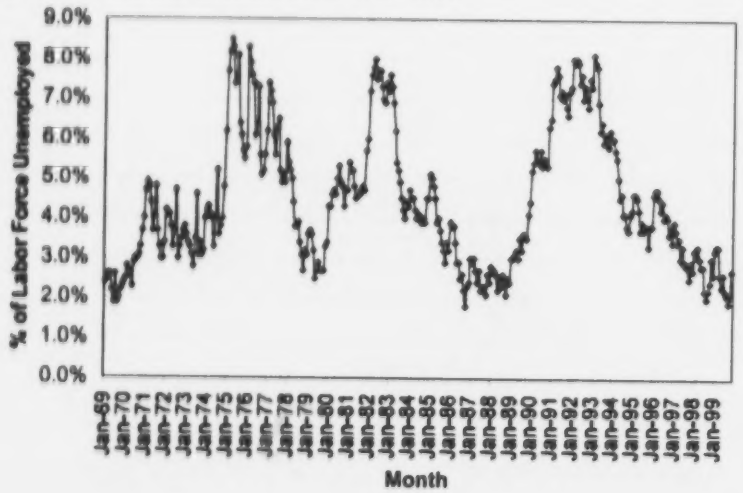
The *unemployment rate* is the number of individuals who are unemployed and actively seeking employment divided by the total number of individuals in the labor force.

The *unemployment equivalent index* measures the impact of low wages upon community earnings by converting low wages to a rate of unemployment. The unemployment equivalent index is defined as the number of jobs that would pay zero wages in order for a Labor Market Area with wages below the state average to have the remainder of the jobs pay the average annual wage and still have the same aggregate wages.

Findings

In late 1999, New Hampshire enjoyed near record low unemployment, as measured by the unemployment rate. Most adults actively seeking a job were able to find one. Figure 2-3 displays the unemployment rate in New Hampshire for each month since January 1969.

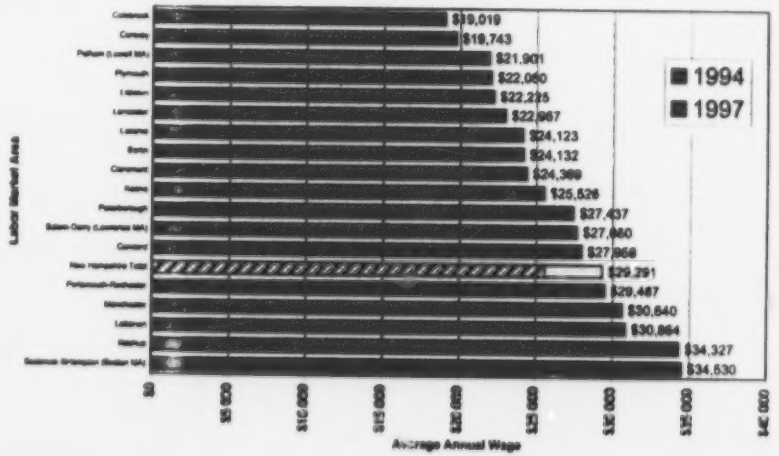
Figure 2-3 NH Unemployment Rates 1969 - 1999



Unemployment rates, however, only measure the opportunity for employment. The unemployment rate does not identify whether the wages paid by the employment at hand are adequate to raise a family. The unemployment equivalent index presented below provides a measure of the impact of low wages on a community.

Analysis of the unemployment equivalent index begins with data from the *KIDS COUNT New Hampshire 1996 Data Book*. In that book, we presented data on the prevailing wages in the eighteen labor market areas of the state using data from 1994. The figure below updates that data to 1997.[14]

Figure 2-4 Average Annual Wages 1994 & 1997 by NH Labor Market Area



The average annual wage of a job in New Hampshire grew from $25,556 in 1994 to $29,291 in 1997, an increase of 14.6%. Over the same period, the consumer price index increased 8.3%. On average, wages in New Hampshire rose more rapidly than the cost of living. However, the wage structure in New Hampshire still shows considerable difference from region to region, in particular from north to south. Average annual wages increased by nearly $4,000 in the Nashua and Salem/Derry labor markets, but by $2,000 or less in the labor markets of the North Country. Berlin, for example, saw average annual wages rise only 7.5%, less than the increase in the consumer price index, while the Salem/Derry area saw wages increase an average of 18.5%, more than double the consumer price index.

These variations in average annual wage increases create tremendous differences in opportunity across the state. In 1994, the average job in Conway paid $12,227 less than the average job in the Nashua Labor Market Area. By 1997, while both experienced higher wages, the gap had grown to $14,584.

The low wage structure in some parts of the state has an impact on economic well being, which is analogous to an elevated unemployment rate. Whereas unemployment represents an acute income problem for a small percentage of the labor force, a low wage structure affects a larger number of people with a *chronic* income problem. They may have jobs, but those jobs do not pay enough to meet normal expenses in a given year.

The unemployment equivalent index presented here seeks to identify the level of unemployment that would represent the same aggregate economy as the wages missing through a low wage structure. The results for each labor market area are displayed in Table 2-2.

Wages in New Hampshire have increased more rapidly than the cost of living, on average. Regional variations, however, create tremendous differences in the wage structure across the state.

It takes three average jobs in Conway to earn the same income as two average jobs in Nashua.

Table 2-2 Unemployment Equivalent Index By Labor Market Area as Derived from Wage Deficiencies, 1997

Labor Market Areas	Excess (Deficiency) in Wages Compared to NH State Average	Unemployment Equivalent Index
Seabrook-S Hampton (Boston MA)	$28,227,119	N/A
Nashua	$452,309,014	N/A
Lebanon	$40,517,382	N/A
Manchester	$127,725,107	N/A
Portsmouth-Rochester	$19,106,690	N/A
New Hampshire Total	**$0**	**0%**
Concord	-$82,510,321	5%
Salem-Derry (Lawrence MA)	-$69,225,541	6%
Peterborough	-$21,366,470	7%
Keene	-$101,238,333	15%
Claremont	-$83,086,458	20%
Berlin	-$35,708,035	21%
Laconia	-$115,028,613	21%
Lancaster	-$18,806,593	28%
Littleton	-$72,658,200	32%
Plymouth	-$84,081,248	33%
Pelham (Lowell MA)	-$12,925,259	34%
Conway	-$163,517,752	48%
Colebrook	-$22,332,017	54%

Significance

Our "unemployment equivalent index" may be best explained by example. If the total wages paid in the Claremont Labor Market Area in 1997 were the same as the average state wages instead of the prevailing lower wages in Claremont, there would be 20.2% fewer jobs. Assuming that each member of the labor force has only one job, this would add 20.2% to the unemployment rate in Claremont.[15] Certainly, the "pain" would have been spread among families in

the community differently if there had actually been a 20% unemployment rate, but the effect of low wages on aggregate earnings of everyone in a community can be represented by this unemployment equivalent index.

The high unemployment equivalent rates in some communities translate into decreased economic security for many children. Given the high correlation between low income and poor child outcomes, communities in the Labor Market Areas with high unemployment equivalencies need to address the issues of: jobs that pay wages capable of supporting a family; the accessibility and affordability of education; and the accessibility and affordability of training to enable workers to qualify for higher paying, skilled jobs.

2.3 Births to Mothers Who Have Not Completed High School

Definition

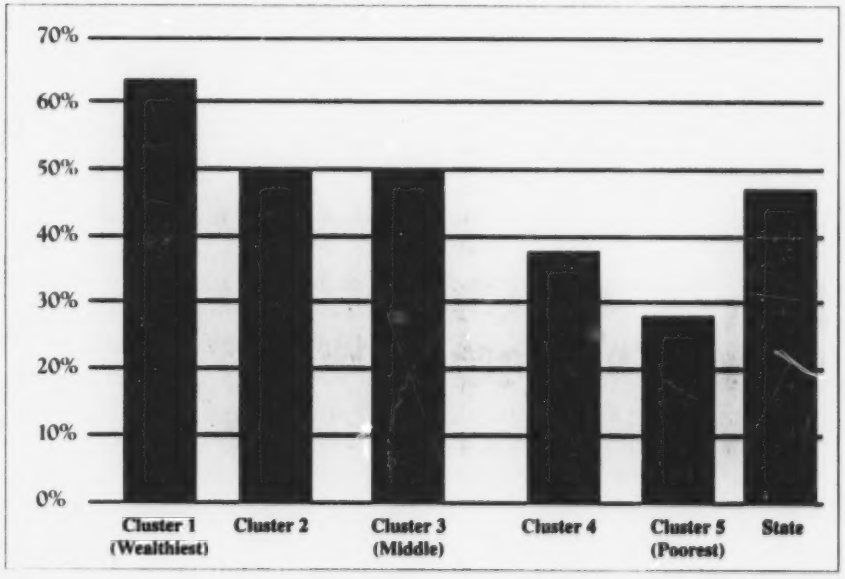
Births to mothers who have not completed high school are counted at the time of childbirth. The count includes older mothers who dropped out of school before graduation and younger mothers still enrolled in school. Rates are calculated for every 1,000 live births.

Findings

Births among women who have not graduated from high school have been declining consistently over the past two decades, from a state average of 145.7 per thousand in 1973, to 78.1 per thousand in 1997. On average, births to mothers without a high school diploma have declined 46% in the past 24 years.

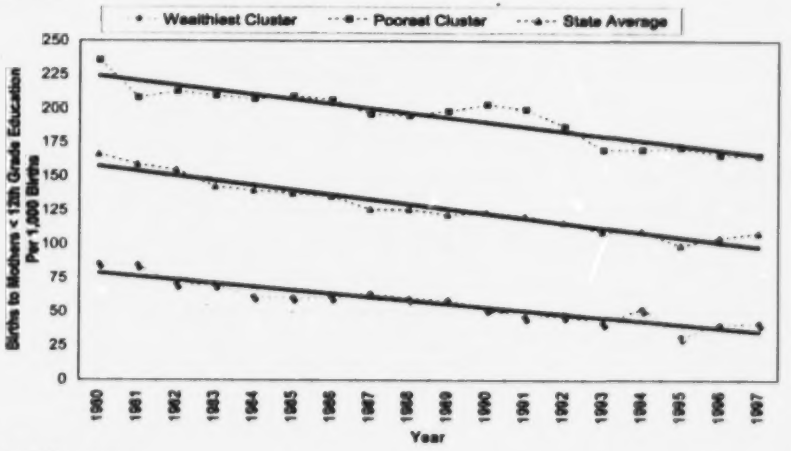
The decline has occurred in each economic cluster, but on a percentage basis it has been greatest in the wealthiest communities, as shown below.

Figure 2-5 Decline in Births 1973-1997



From 1980 to 1997, the difference in rates between clusters has grown significantly. In 1980, the rate in the poorest communities was about three times that in the wealthiest communities. In 1997, after 17 years of decline, it was four times as great in the poorest communities as in the wealthiest.[16]

Figure 2-6 Births to Mothers with Less Than 12th Grade Education by Economic Cluster



Significance

A child born to a mother who has not completed high school is at risk both educationally and economically.

Studies show a correlation between a mother's level of education and a child's pace of learning, a child's ability to read, a child's school readiness, and a child's likelihood of becoming a school dropout.[17]

So too, studies show a correlation between a mother's high school completion and the economic well being of children. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, recent high school dropouts in 1997 earned an average $15,000 annually, compared with $22,000 for a high school graduate and $38,000 for a college graduate.[18] Support for mothers to help them attain – at a minimum – their high school diplomas translates into parent support that gives mothers the tools they need to provide a safe, stimulating environment for their children.

The birthrate for mothers who have not completed high school is four times higher in the poorest communities than in the wealthiest communities.

2.4 Children Receiving Public Assistance

Definition

Children receiving public assistance are the number and percentage of children for whom the state provides support in the form of food stamps and/or Medicaid, and cash grants (known as Aid to Families with Dependent Children or AFDC until August 1999, when it changed to Temporary Aid to Needy Families or TANF).

Findings

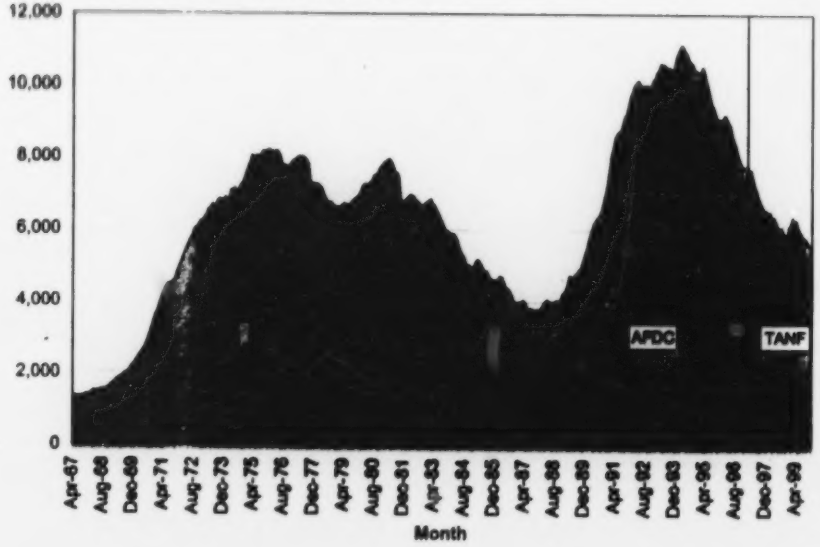
The number of cash welfare-dependent children has fallen considerably since October 1995. At that point, 5.1% of New Hampshire children (14,993 children) lived in families receiving cash AFDC grants.[19] In August 1999, 3.1% of our children (9,375 children) were reported to be living in families receiving TANF.[20] This represents a decline of 37.5% in 46 months.

The decrease in the number and percentage of children living in families receiving cash aid is due to two factors: the improved New Hampshire economy and the changes in federal/state welfare policies that occurred when the TANF program replaced the AFDC program. While the degree to which either of these factors contributed to the decline cannot be determined, Figure 2-7 shows a falling caseload that began under the AFDC program and continued at approximately the same rate under TANF.

The current low number is not without precedent: there were only 3,988 AFDC cases in August 1988, during the boom immediately prior to the last recession. In December 1999, there were 5,536 cases. The current economic boom, unprecedented in its length, together with the welfare reform measures enacted by Congress and the state legislature, have not reduced the basic cash welfare caseload below that of 1988.

Figure 2-7 displays the monthly count of AFDC/TANF cases (not children) from April 1967 through December 1999.[21]

Figure 2-7 AFDC/TANF Cases 1967-1999



Dependence on public assistance varies considerably in the state based upon economic cluster. As set forth in Table 2-3, less than 1% of the 71,911 children living in the 41 communities that comprise cluster 1 are living in families receiving welfare assistance. In contrast, 5.7% of the 58,404 children living in 29 communities of cluster 4 are dependent on cash welfare assistance.

Table 2-3 Welfare-Dependent Children by KIDS COUNT Cluster

Cluster	Town Count	0-17 Year Olds[22]	1999 TANF Children	1995 AFDC Children	1999 % Children TANF	1995-1999 % Decline
1 (wealthiest)	41	73,911	596	1,111	0.8%	46.4%
2	35	59,346	1,514	2,842	2.6%	46.7%
3 (middle)	54	59,230	1,622	2,676	2.7%	39.4%
4	29	58,404	3,308	4,873	5.7%	32.1%
5 (poorest)	76	53,671	2,335	3,491	4.4%	33.1%
State	235	304,562	9,375	14,993	3.1%	37.5%

Table 2-3 shows a variance of about 6:1 in welfare dependence among children in the different clusters. The Table also shows that the relative decline in need for public dependence from 1995-1999 favored the already better-off cluster 1 and 2 communities over the poorer cluster 4 and 5 communities. Starting from a low level of welfare incidence, these communities saw a decline of over 45% in the number of children dependent on welfare assistance, while in the poorer cluster 4 and 5 communities, the decline was only about 33%.

This economic stratification of New Hampshire communities is also reflected in the percent of families receiving food stamps and Medicaid in the five economic clusters. As with AFDC/TANF, the difference among clusters is striking. The number of dependents in each program in the poorest cluster is four or five times the number in the wealthiest cluster.

In the two poorest clusters, just over 10,000 children were dependent on food stamps.

In the two poorest clusters, more than 23,000 children obtained their health care through Medicaid.

Table 2-4 Food Stamp and Medicaid Dependent Children by KIDS COUNT Cluster

Cluster	Medicaid Children	Food Stamp Children	% Children with Medicaid	% Children Receiving Food Stamps
1 (wealthiest)	3,364	910	4.6%	1.2%
2	6,120	2,565	10.3%	4.3%
3 (middle)	7,598	3,038	12.8%	5.1%
4	11,559	5,601	19.8%	9.6%
5 (poorest)	11,757	4,403	21.9%	8.2%
State	40,398	16,517	13.3%	5.4%

Significance

The success of welfare reform should not be measured solely by a drop in the welfare rolls. All government needs to do to reduce welfare rolls is to make it more difficult for beneficiaries to qualify for assistance. The real measure of success is a reduction in poverty – to date, a success not achieved in New Hampshire where child poverty has increased over the past ten years.

What will real success require? Imposing work requirements is not enough. Nationwide, an increasing number of poor children live in working families. Just four years ago, only six in ten poor children lived in families that worked. Today, seven out of ten poor children live in a family where one or more parent or guardian works.[23] For many children, the loss of means-tested cash assistance has not been offset by wage gains from employment.[24] An alarming number of former TANF recipients are not earning enough to cover their basic needs and are forsaking use of programs, like Medicaid and food stamps, for which they are still eligible.

Economic Security

For welfare reform to be truly successful and for child poverty to end, programs must be developed that lead struggling parents to stable jobs with livable wages and ensure that poor children are not the unwitting victims of reform that pushes them further into poverty. This must include more flexible time limits for TANF, education and job training programs, expanded day care options, transportation aid, higher minimum wages, expanded housing assistance, expanded nutrition programs, and TANF benefits for poor children, among other needed adjustments.

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2.5 What We Would Like to Know About Our Children's Economic Security

Current limitations in data collection and availability of data impede analysis of economic trends and how they impact lower-income children and their families. The following recommendations are provided so that we may better understand the impact of welfare reforms, fine-tune existing programs, and develop new approaches, should they be indicated.

Department of Education
With respect to children who are eligible for *free and reduced-price school meals*, information is collected annually by the Department of Education from the public schools. There are currently some anomalies in the data. The most important is that students have not been tallied by their town of residence, only their school. In some multi-town school districts of the state, this results in an inability to determine relative poverty levels among children from different towns. More recently, it has meant that estimates must be used in calculation of state aid to specific towns. The data collected from the schools should count the children, both eligible and ineligible, by town of residence.

Department of Employment Security
For decades, the Department of Employment Security has calculated *average wages* in manufacturing industries every month. The services and retail sales industries are both now larger in total employment than manufacturing and are growing, while manufacturing is stagnant or declining. Wage rates for these industries should be calculated and published monthly, as is done for manufacturing. This is especially important in tracking whether wage disparities are widening or narrowing.

Department of Health and Human Services (DH&HS)
Information on *cost of living* is essential to determine a true standard of need for assistance programs. The New Hampshire legislature contracted and paid for a major "market basket" study on the costs of maintaining a family in our state. Since then, DH&HS has annually updated the figures based, in part, on general measures of inflation. The results, however, may not accurately reflect the escalation of health insurance and housing costs in New Hampshire. The Department should return to the original study and update the cost of each component of the "market basket" by an appropriate amount.

So too, with respect to *children receiving public assistance*, there is a great need for improvements in data collection systems to get a clearer, more accurate handle on current trends. Prior to July 1988, DH&HS produced and distributed a regular monthly report of the number of households and individuals who receive financial assistance from the State. Since that time, no report has been available. The prior practice should be reinstated. Monthly reports would allow for more complex reports and time trend analysis and provide answers to questions such as: How is duration of assistance related to family size, prior marital status, age of birth of first child, prior work experience? What percentage of children receiving assistance has had a prior period of eligibility? Among children in families receiving food stamps, what percentage is in intact two-parent-families? How do these different subgroups change as economic conditions change over time? Which medical services are being used at an increased rate by children on Medicaid? Which are being used at a reduced rate? Dozens of questions like these could be asked and the answers could inform policy and program management decisions.

Finally, with respect to *child support*, the Department used to produce monthly reports on the number of child support cases and the amount collected on behalf of children. In 1999, information on the number of families or children receiving child support was unavailable in a form to allow statistical analysis. The legal requirement for child support by a parent is important for the well being of children. When a parent does not provide financial support at the minimally required level, the child suffers. The public suffers too because child support is a means of ensuring that children do not become dependent on the state. Whatever barriers now exist to compiling and presenting statistical information on enforcing child support should be removed.

Department of Revenue Administration
There is a need for a yearly update of per capita income (PCI) in the state. The U.S. Bureau of the Census calculates PCI for each town every ten years. Prior to 1999, the Department of Revenue Administration updated these figures on an annual basis between census years using federal tax returns and information on population changes. In 1999, the law requiring the Department of Revenue Administration to calculate PCI was repealed and the Department no longer plans to make such calculations in the future. This will be a loss for our ability to assess economic conditions in the state because we will again have only the Census data once every ten years to look closely at differences among communities. Public understanding and state policy would be better served if the Department were to continue the calculations in conjunction with the Office of State Planning and to make the adjustment for group living quarters described in

section 2.1, note 5.

New Hampshire Emergency Shelter Commission

The New Hampshire Emergency Shelter Commission, in conjunction with the DH&HS, produces an annual report on *homelessness*. The 1997-1998 report contents were almost exclusively various listings of shelters, their funding sources, and the number of services provided. Little information was provided on the numbers of homeless individuals, families, and children. The state should tabulate information that gives at least as much attention to describing the situation of the homeless as it does to the shelters in order to be useful in planning ways of alleviating or preventing homelessness among children.

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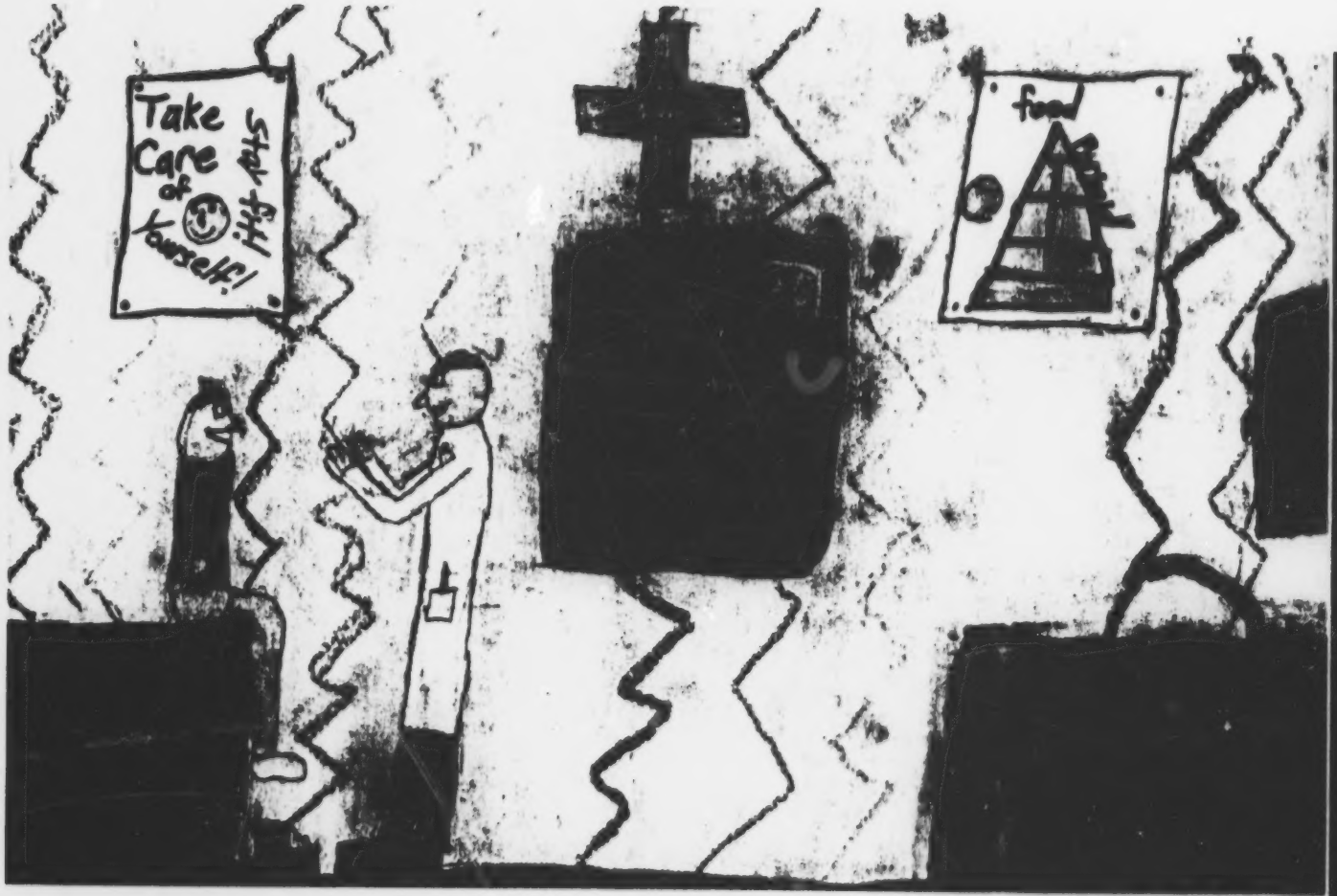
CHAPTER 3
Health



3.1 Births to Women Lacking Adequate Prenatal Care

Definition

Births to women lacking adequate prenatal care are those births in which the mother did not obtain medical consultation prior to the last three months of the pregnancy. Rates are calculated per every 1,000 live births.

Findings

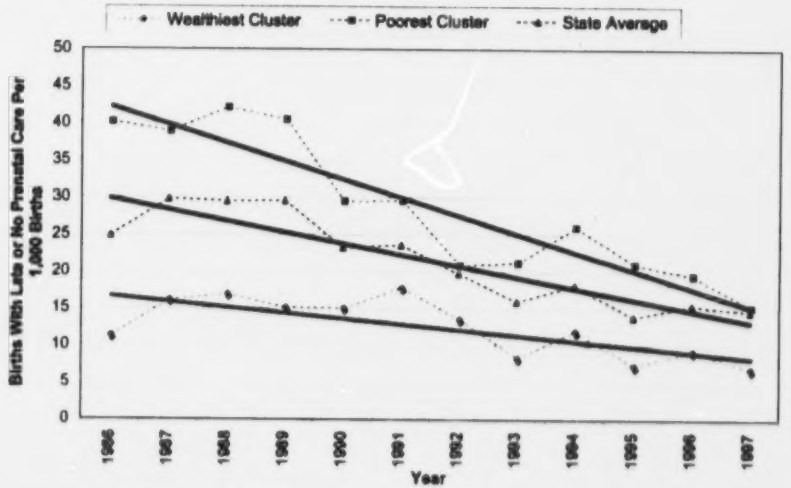
The rate of births to women lacking adequate prenatal care in New Hampshire has been cut in half over the past ten years, falling from 29.8 per 1,000 live births in 1987 to 14.6 per 1,000 in 1997.

Women who do not obtain adequate care are not distributed uniformly in the state's population. Figure 3-1 plots the rates of these births for cluster 1 (wealthiest) and cluster 5 (poorest) and the state average. For each of the three groups, a linear trend line has also been plotted and highlighted.[1]

The figure shows that:

- the rate of inadequate care was three to four times higher in the poorer communities than in the wealthiest cluster;
- the decline in the rate of births lacking adequate care has been greatest in the poorer communities;
- the bulk of the decline in the poorest communities occurred between 1989 and 1992, years when Medicaid eligibility was being expanded to higher family income levels.[2] For example, in the poorest cluster, the rate fell 64% between 1986 and 1997, three-quarters of which occurred in the 1989-1992 period.

Figure 3-1 Births with Inadequate Prenatal Care by Economic Cluster



Significance

Tracking births to women lacking inadequate prenatal care provides insight in two critical areas: health risks to infants and children lacking health insurance.

It is well-documented that women who receive late or no prenatal care face increased risk of complications at birth. The children of women who receive late or no prenatal care face a higher chance of low birth weight and death in the first year of life.[3] The decline in women lacking adequate prenatal care is encouraging- as is the news that the expansion of Medicaid eligibility appears to have positively impacted this indicator of child well being.

But what about those women who still lack adequate prenatal care? We know that the children of these mothers are more likely to lack health insurance.[4] According to a recent survey by the Department of Health and Human Services, 25,000 children in New Hampshire lack health insurance.[5] While this information provides insight into the scope of the problem, it does not allow analysis of the problem at a community level. Analysis of births to mothers lacking adequate prenatal care provides a proxy by which to gauge likely uninsured children on a community level. The fact that the rate of inadequate prenatal care was three to four times higher in the poorer communities than in the wealthiest cluster suggests a similar ratio in the lack of health insurance for children in different communities.

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Attention to this trend is necessary in light of what we know about the importance of health insurance for children. Lack of health insurance can result in untreated illnesses, lack of timely immunizations, untreated developmental disorders, or undetected mental illness. One recent study found that uninsured children were 25% more likely to miss school than children with health insurance, and we know that missing school contributes to higher truancy and school failure.[6]

The *Children's Agenda 2000* calls for a reduction in barriers to health care coverage. An estimated 74% of the uninsured children in this state are eligible for, but not enrolled in, state- sponsored health insurance.[7] Increased outreach and barrier reduction efforts are needed to ensure that these children have access to and use preventive and primary health care services.

The rate of births to women lacking adequate prenatal care in New Hampshire has been cut in half over the past ten years.

The recent decline in the rate of births to women lacking adequate prenatal care occurred during a period when the state greatly expanded eligibility for Medicaid-paid health services for the working poor. It appears that this expansion of Medicaid had a significant positive impact with respect to access to prenatal care, especially in the state's poorest communities.

New Hampshire Healthy Kids Insurance

- **Children up to age 19 are eligible for health insurance through New Hampshire Healthy Kids.**
- **Healthy Kids Gold provides coverage with no cost to the family.**
- **Healthy Kids Silver provides coverage with a low monthly premium—from $20/ month to $80/month per child.**
- **Eligibility for Healthy Kids Gold and Healthy Kids Silver depends upon family income.**
- **Income limits are higher for families with children under the age of 1.**

3.2 Low Birthweight Infants

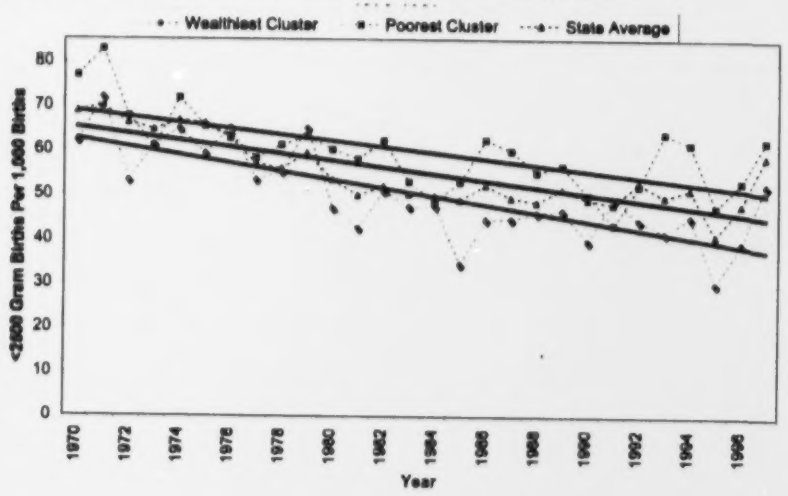
Definition

Low birthweight infants counts births in which the infant weighed 2,500 grams (5.5 pounds) or less. Rates are calculated per every 1,000 live births.

Findings

In New Hampshire, the incidence of low birthweight babies has been falling over the last 27 years. Figure 3-2 shows the steady decline in this indicator.[8]

Figure 3-2 Births Under 2500 Grams by Town Economic Cluster



Significance

An infant who is born weighing under 2,500 grams may be at immediate risk of serious health and developmental complications.[9] Such babies are 20 times more likely to die as infants than babies of normal birthweight.[10] For low birthweight babies who survive to the middle school years, they are 50% more likely to require special education than their peers who were of normal birthweight.[11]

The incidence of low birthweight infants has always been relatively equally distributed among the economic clusters compared to inadequate prenatal care.[12] The decline has been general across the clusters, and there appears to have been no discernible effect from the expansion of Medicaid eligibility in the early 1990s.

In 1996, New Hampshire was ranked number one in the country based on its low incidence of low birthweight babies.[13]

3.3 Births to Teen Mothers

Definition

Births to teen mothers counts births in which the mother was 19 years old or younger. Rates are calculated per every 1,000 live births.

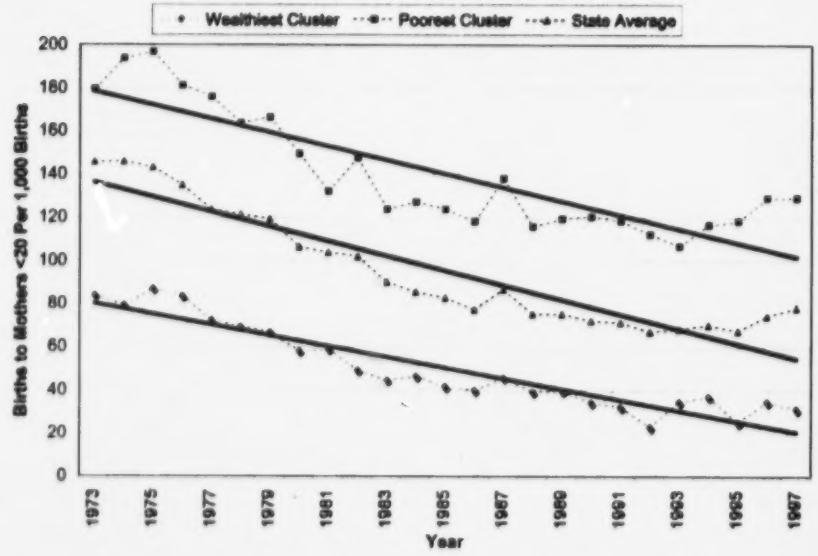
Findings

Births to teen mothers declined statewide by 46% between 1973 and 1997, from a rate of 145.7 per thousand to a rate of 78.1 per thousand. The period of decline, however, ended in about 1992. Since that time, the percentage of births to teenage mothers has begun to inch back upward. By 1997, it was nearly 10 per thousand higher than it was in 1992, as seen in Figure 3-3.[14]

A strong relationship exists between births to teenagers and community economics. In 1973, at the beginning of this time series, the rate of births to teen mothers in the poorest cluster was a little more than double that in the wealthiest cluster. In the generation between 1973 and 1997, the rate had fallen 63% in the wealthiest communities and only 28% in the poorest communities, with the result that *rates in the poorest* communities are now more than four times those in the wealthiest communities. Further, the rate in 1997 in the poorest communities was still well above that in the wealthiest communities in 1973, a whole generation ago. This is consistent with national trends. In the United States, 83% of all births to teens occur in poor and low-income families.[15]

Births to teen mothers are four times higher in the poorest communities than in the wealthiest ones.

Figure 3-3 Births to Mothers Under 20 Years of Age by Town Economic Cluster



Significance

Births to teen mothers pose a risk to both mother and child. A teen mother faces an above average risk of complications in pregnancy, ranging from toxemia to cervical trauma, to premature delivery. After birth, teen mothers face diminished economic opportunities. Seven out of ten teen mothers drop out of high school. During their first thirteen years of parenthood, teen mothers earn an average of $5,600 per year – less than 50% of the federal poverty threshold.[16] Children born to teens are less likely to receive adequate prenatal care. These children are more likely to experience poor health, poverty, and school failure.[17]

The recent rise in teen births is cause for alarm and a call to action. The remedy lies in targeted prevention programs:

◆ Prevention, because research has shown that teenage pregnancy prevention programs are effective in terms of service delivery and cost effectiveness. For every tax dollar spent on contraceptive services, taxpayers save about $4 that would otherwise be required for support services and medical care.[18]

◆ Targeted, because the data reveal such striking differences among communities with respect to teen birth rates. Educational and family planning services need to be heavily targeted to communities with high teen birth rates. Parenting education needs to be available to all teen mothers.

Action recommended in the *Children's Agenda 2000* includes: comprehensive health education as an integral part of school curricula (kindergarten through high school), support for community-based sexuality education, and support for family education models that enhance parent-teen communications.

Poor academic performance is a predictor of teen pregnancy.[19]

Teen pregnancy may perpetuate the cycle of poverty, as teen mothers are more likely to drop out of school and to have reduced earning potential.

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3.4 Substance Abuse

Definition

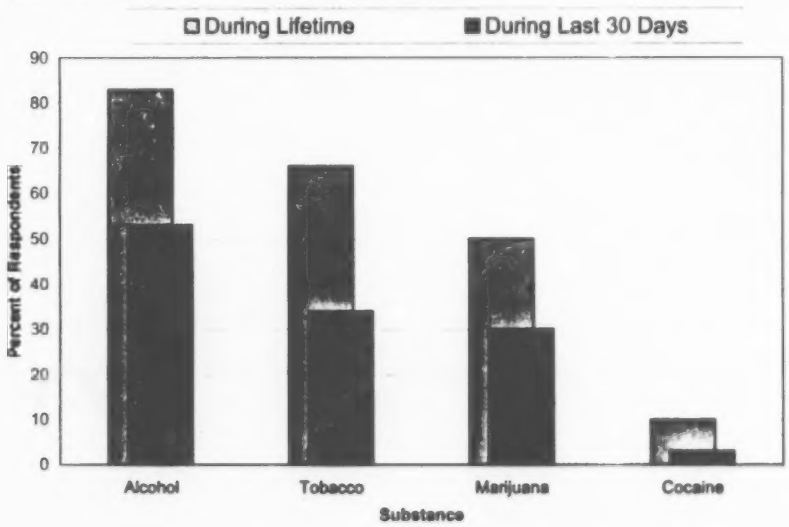
Substance abuse measures the percentage of youth (grades 9-12) who indicate they have used alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs during a specified period of time.

Findings

In 1999, the New Hampshire Department of Education conducted a survey among high school students (grades 9-12) regarding risky behavior.[20] Of 2,213 New Hampshire high school students who responded, 53% indicated they had consumed alcohol within the past 30 days, 34% had smoked tobacco, 30% had smoked marijuana, and 3% had used some form of cocaine during the same period. The rates of ever having used these substances during their lifetimes were 83%, 66%, 50%, and 10% respectively. These are shown in Figure 3-4.

Of 33 states surveyed in 1997, New Hampshire ranked sixth highest for high school drinking. That figure contrasts sharply with our ranking as the sixth lowest state nationwide for per capita expenditures on alcohol and other drug services.[21]

Figure 3-4 Substance Abuse by Responding Teens



Significance

Substance abuse poses a risk to children, families, and the broader community:

- Children who abuse drugs and alcohol are more likely to engage in high-risk sexual behavior, become teen parents, drop out of school, and/or become court involved.[22]
- Children ages 12 to 17 who smoke marijuana are twice as likely to cut classes at school, steal, assault others, or destroy property than those who do not smoke marijuana.[23]
- Children who use alcohol are more likely to abuse drugs as adults.[24]
- Children who use tobacco are more likely to become addicted to nicotine, thereby increasing their risk for smoking and nicotine-related diseases.[25]

New Hampshire needs to make a substantial investment in substance abuse prevention efforts and aggressively address the serious challenge of drug and alcohol use by New Hampshire youth.

Prevention programs need to target children before as well as during adolescence and focus on helping our youth develop critical life skills and supportive relationships.[26] Immediate action steps recommended in the *Children's Agenda 2000* include:

- Government agencies need to identify and support best-practice models for in-school and community-based substance abuse prevention programs, peer acceptance, and self-esteem programs.
- Community-based substance abuse support groups should be incorporated into the school setting.
- Local businesses should consider ways to develop mentoring and job-shadowing opportunities in their communities.
- Local schools should encourage parental involvement.
- State government should make grants available to communities for violence prevention training.
- State and local government should support after school programming as a part of an adequate education.
- Comprehensive health education, including information on sexuality, drugs and alcohol should be incorporated as an integral part of school curricula, kindergarten through grade twelve.

3.5 Infant and Child Deaths

Definition

Infant deaths are the number of deaths among live-born children prior to their first birthday. The rate is calculated per 1,000 live births. *Child deaths* are the number of deaths among children ages 0-18.

Findings

The infant death rate in New Hampshire has consistently ranked among the lowest in the United States; in 1997, it was 4.4 per 1,000 live births. That compares to a national rate in 1996 of 7.3 deaths per 1,000 births.[27] Indeed, New Hampshire's infant death rate ranks among the lowest in the world as displayed in Table 3-1.[28]

Table 3-1 Infant Deaths Per 1,000 Live Births, Selected Countries and New Hampshire

	Infant Deaths per 1,000 Live Births
Japan	4
New Hampshire, Germany, Iceland, Norway, Sweden	5
Canada, Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Netherlands, Australia, Switzerland	6
United States, Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, United Kingdom	7

The infant death rate has fallen over the most recent five years for which data is available, declining from 94 infant deaths in 1992 to 63 infant deaths in 1997. During that five-year period, total infant deaths were 484.

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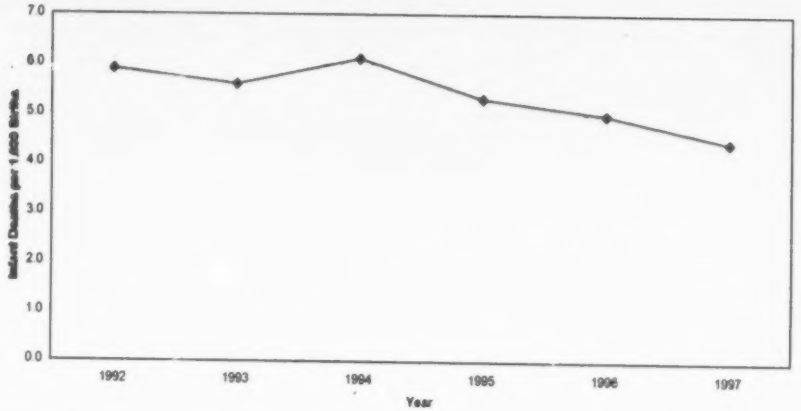
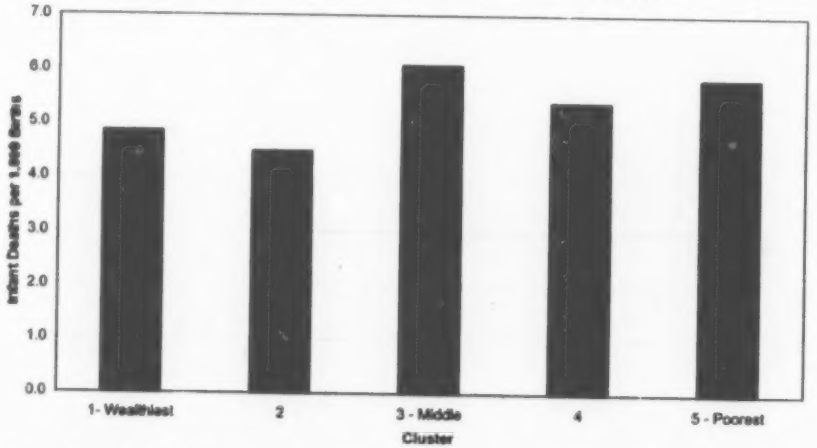
Figure 3-5 Infant Deaths Per 1,000 Live Births



Although socioeconomic status is often associated with higher infant mortality rates,[29] our analysis of the infant death rate over the most recent five-year period did not show a strong linkage between economic conditions in the community and infant death rates, as set forth in Figure 3-6.

Figure 3-6 Infant Death Rate by Town Economic Cluster 1992-1997



New Hampshire's low infant death rate is paralleled by a child death rate lower than the national average in all age groupings as set forth in Table 3-2.[30]

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Table 3-2 Deaths to Children Age 0-19, 1993-1997

	Count of Deaths		Rate per 100,000 Children	
	US	NH	US	NH
Age <1	151,291	396	770.9	534.8
Ages 1-4	31,708	74	40.5	23.7
Ages 5-9	18,872	52	19.7	12.2
Ages 10-14	23,239	87	24.7	20.9
Ages 15-19	74,305	179	81.9	48.6
Ages 0-19	299,413	788	79.1	49.3

As in infant deaths, we found no relationship between child deaths, certain causes of death, and economic conditions.

Significance

Both nationally and in New Hampshire, adolescents have a much higher rate of mortality than children (excluding infant deaths). Nationwide, motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of adolescent mortality, followed by deaths from firearms and then suicide.[31] Alcohol and other drugs are major factors in adolescent mortality caused by trauma. Nearly one-half of motor vehicle accidents and homicides among adolescents, and 30% of adolescent suicides, are associated with the use of alcohol and other drugs. Alcohol has also been implicated in the majority of adolescent drownings, fire-related deaths, and fatal falls.[32] The call for increased investment in substance abuse prevention is supported by these sobering facts.

3.6 What We Would Like to Know About Our Children's Health

Current data limitations preclude full analysis of a number of topics critical to child health. The following recommendations call for enhanced data collection by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education.

Department of Health and Human Services (DH&HS)

Access to health care is dependent in large part upon health insurance. At the time of our data collection, only rough estimates were available of the number of the state's children who lack health insurance. Since then, DH&HS has completed a scientific survey of health and health insurance issues. We expect to see important data from that study that will increase knowledge of this issue as it affects children. We hope the department will update at least portions of the survey annually so that trends in this critical area can be monitored closely.

KIDS COUNT New Hampshire would like to include a measure of the *mental health* of our children. However, detailed information on the number of children who receive mental health services- such as breakdowns by age, gender, severity of need, duration of services, town of residence, age at first encounter, and diagnosis- is not available at present. The Medicaid and mental health management information systems do not produce tallies, analyses, or reports of that type. The state's mental health program should be able to provide statistical information on the kinds of services it offers and provides to the state's children.

Data limitations with respect to children's health also affected our ability to report on other issues: child immunizations, lead poisoning, sexually transmitted diseases among teenagers, and obesity.

With respect to *immunizations*, only rough estimates of the numbers of children who do not receive necessary immunizations in New Hampshire exist at present. The National Immunization Survey- a collaborative effort between the National Center for Health Statistics and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Immunization Program- collects information on the immunization coverage of children 19 months to 35 months of age across the United States. Because it is a national survey, the sample size in New Hampshire (about 420) results in only a rough estimate of 12-20% of toddlers lacking full immunization; it is inadequate to ascertain anything below the state level that might be used to target resources to communities most in need. DH&HS should work with the National Immunization survey to greatly expand the sample size in New Hampshire so that more useful data could be provided annually for following trends, setting state policy, and targeting public resources to ensure higher immunization levels.

With respect to *lead poisoning*, DH&HS collects information on all blood-lead-level tests done on children below the age of 12. Although DH&HS did provide *KIDS COUNT New Hampshire* with the total count of tests and children who tested positive for potentially dangerous levels of lead, it would not release information broken down by location such as town of residence. *In 1999, an alarming 1 in 25 of children tested had blood lead levels indicative of learning problems.* It would be useful, both for state policy-makers and for local health officials, to know the relative distribution of this problem.

Finally, with respect to *sexually transmitted diseases* (STDs) among teenagers, DH&HS provided statewide counts of STDs but was unwilling to provide a breakdown of this data on a town level. As with the information on lead poisoning, the data have been collected and are in the hands of the state, but are not being released for use in public policy research.

Department of Education

Substance abuse is a serious threat to the health of children and families. The Youth Behavior Risk Survey of the Department of Education has collected and published aggregate tabulations on alcohol, tobacco, and drug use among some high school students. But the students were not a true random selection and it is impossible to use the results to project them to the total population of New Hampshire high school students. This type of study should be regularly repeated, but it should be conducted on either a universal or scientific sampling basis so that the results can actually be used to make year-to-year comparisons and to compare the behavior of New Hampshire students to national averages. A universal survey of all students would allow each local community to ascertain the trends and conditions among its own teens and would, therefore, be preferable. Also, if other characteristics of the students were collected at the same time, it would be possible to do cross-tabulations that would allow specific "at risk" groups to be better identified.

Obesity among children is a significant and growing national health concern. There is no centrally collected data on the incidence of this problem in New Hampshire. However, hundreds of school nurses all over the state have height and weight measurements of children, especially in elementary schools, that could be used to determine obesity rates. If the nurses would compile this information at each school and submit it to a central location on an annual basis, the degree to which obesity is a public health problem affecting children in New Hampshire could be assessed and addressed.

CHAPTER 4
Safety

4.1 Abused and Neglected Children

Definition

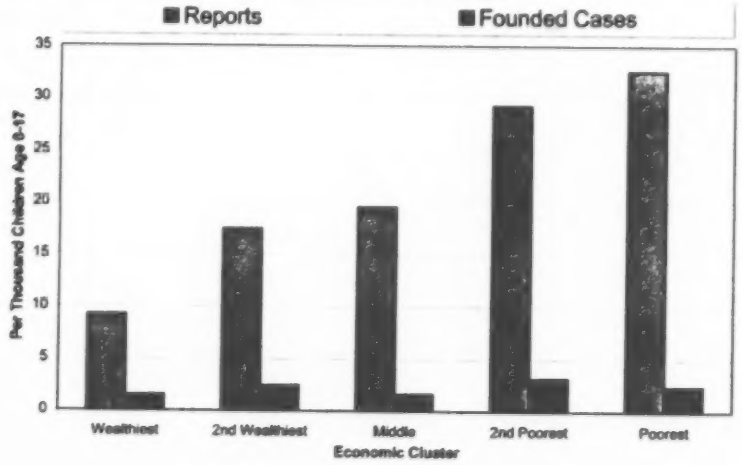
Abused and neglected children are children who have been physically, sexually or psychologically injured or who have been abandoned by a parent or guardian.[1] Child abuse and neglect is measured by (1) referrals to and action by the Division of Children Youth and Families (DCYF)[2] and by (2) court filings and dispositions.[3]

Findings

The latest data from DCYF indicate that there were 6,391 assessments of abuse and neglect in 1998. Six hundred and sixty-six (666) cases in 1998[4] were determined to be founded and require some action by the state. For every 1,000 assessments, there were 104 founded cases.[5]

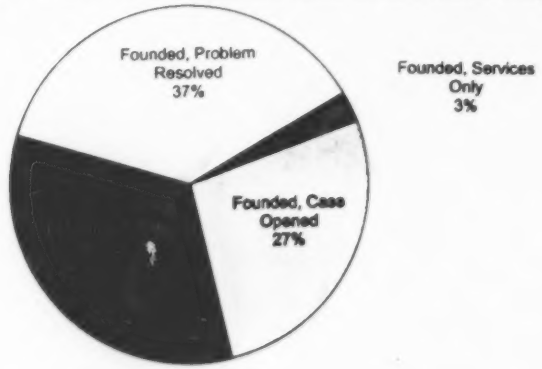
DCYF provided a breakdown of reports and founded cases per 1,000 population in each of the five economic clusters of communities.[6] Figure 4-1 shows there is a clear relationship between the incidence of referrals deemed to require assessments and community economic conditions. In contrast, there is little or no relationship between community economics and the incidence of founded cases.

Figure 4-1 Child Abuse and Neglect Cases 1998



Of the 666 cases determined to be founded in 1998, Figure 4-2 displays their status at the end of the year.[7]

Figure 4-2 Type of Resolution of 1998 Founded Cases of Child Abuse/Neglect



In calendar year 1998, 146 child abuse cases were filed with the district and family courts of New Hampshire. These related to 120 households. During the same year, 768 cases of child neglect were filed, relating to 574 households.[8] Cases were filed almost equally against men and women.[9]

By the end of the 1998, 111 of the abuse cases had been disposed of by the courts and 35 were still open or pending. The disposition of these cases is shown in Figures 4-3 and 4-4.

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Figure 4-3 Court Disposition of 146 Child Abuse Cases Filed in 1998

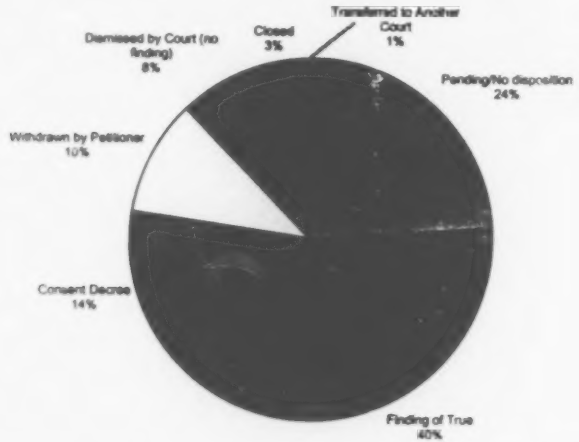
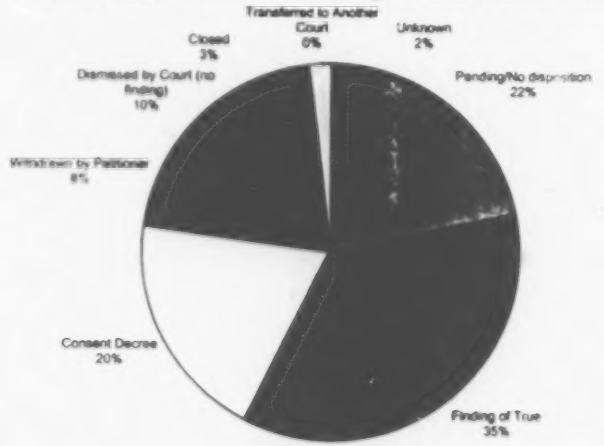
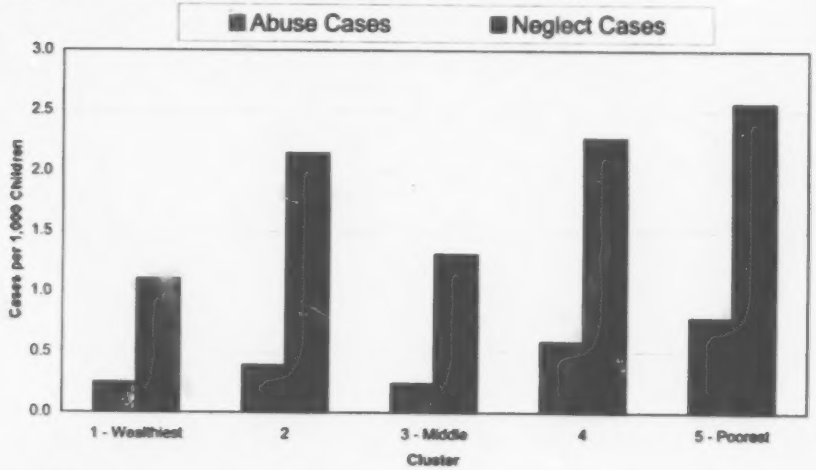


Figure 4-4 Court Disposition of 768 Child Neglect Cases Filed in 1998



These court cases were analyzed by economic cluster as shown in Figure 4-5.[10] There is a weak relationship between community economics and the rate at which cases are filed.

Figure 4-5 Child Abuse and Neglect Cases Filed in NH Courts 1998



Significance

Child abuse and neglect pose a significant challenge to overall child health and well being. Child abuse and neglect are linked to juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, school failure and drop out, teen pregnancy, and emotional disturbances.[11] Resources need to be devoted to prevention and early intervention services that target the multitude of challenges that threaten to overwhelm families, including: poverty, substance abuse, lack of parenting skills, and domestic violence.[12]

Resources also need to be devoted to enhanced data collection. Existing data limitations at both DCYF and the courts hamper analysis of abuse and neglect of our children. For example, because the Department has not issued regular reports in a number of years, it is not possible to determine whether there have been any important recent trends in reports or substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect. Moreover, lack of data prevents further policy analysis. For example, because cases are inadequately documented, it is impossible to find answers to such questions as: Are reports from particular sources (doctors, schools, neighbors) more likely to be founded than others? Are some school districts failing to report possible cases given the number that are being reported by other sources in the same community? Why are the number of reports so high in poorer communities but the number of founded cases relatively flat across all communities? Improved data collection will help the state direct resources where they are most needed.

4.2 Youth Violence

Definition

Youth violence is measured by (1) firearms in schools and (2) youth arrests. *Firearms in schools* are those incidents reported to the state in which a student was found to have brought a firearm to a public school. Youth arrests count arrests of persons under age 18 by state or local police.[13]

Findings

According to a report from the New Hampshire Department of Education, fifteen incidents of children bringing firearms to school occurred during the 1996-97 school year and five incidents in 1997-98.[14] These were reportable incidents under the federal "Guns Free Schools Act."[15]

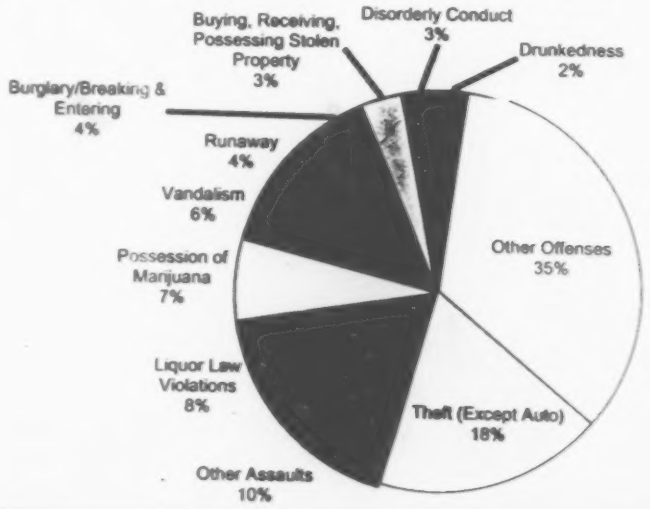
Table 4-1
Firearms Brought to NH Schools 1996-1998

Grade	Incidents	Types
5	2	Handgun, incendiary device
6	1	Handgun
7	1	Handgun
8	6	Handgun (4), 38 caliber pistol (2)
9	4	Handgun (3), Colt .45 automatic
10	3	Shotgun (2), Handgun
11	1	Shotgun
12	2	Handgun, rifle

The number of incidents was split evenly between students in middle school (Grades 5-8) and high school (Grades 9-12). Of all the incidents reported in New Hampshire in the 1996-97 and 1997-98 school years, handguns accounted for almost all the firearms brought by the students. This is consistent with national statistics, which show that handguns were selected by 58% of students who brought firearms to school.[16]

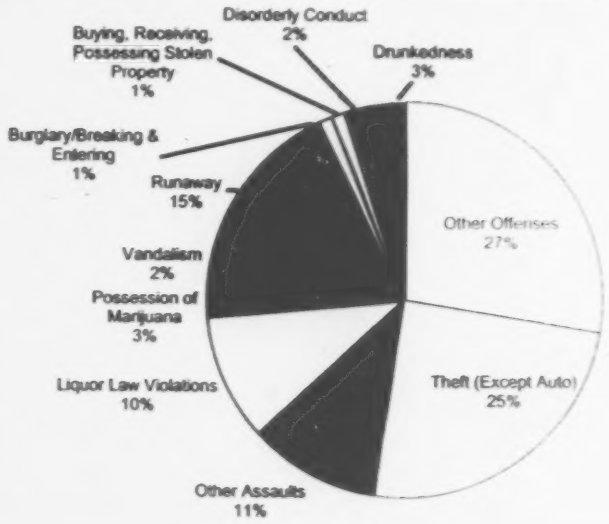
The Department of Safety keeps records of youth arrests. In 1996, the most recent year for which data are available, there were 7,298 reported youth arrests in New Hampshire.[17] Of these, 5,170 were boys and 2,108 were girls, a ratio of 2.45 to 1.

Figure 4-6 1996 Reported Arrests of Young Males (Under Age 18)



Parents, school leaders, government officials and lawmakers must address the issue of accessibility of all firearms including handguns, and support efforts of violence prevention that target all school-aged children from elementary through high school.

Figure 4-7 1996 Reported Arrests of Young Females (Under Age 18)



Figures 4-6 and 4-7 provide a visual representation of the top ten offenses overall, and the way the percentage of arrests differs by gender. The largest difference is for runaways: they account for only 4% of the arrest of boys but 15% of girls. The category labeled "Other Offenses" is an aggregation of many offenses, most of which are not separately identified in the original data.[18]

Significance

Violence is a major problem in the United States that affects all youth.[19] School violence is an especially serious concern. It is reasonable to expect that schools be safe environments for learning and that children not be worried about violence in their schools. Although the number of incidents of students carrying firearms to school in New Hampshire is small, it is indeed disturbing that most of these incidents involve handguns, mirroring national trends.

Another national trend to note is the increase in arrests of female youth for more violent offenses. In New Hampshire, the largest difference in arrest figures for male and female youth is the higher female rate of runaways. Historically, female youth have fled rather than engaged in violent actions. Recent national studies suggest this historical trend is changing. According to a 1999 national report from the U.S. Department of Justice, arrest rates for youth increased twice as much for females as for males between 1981-1997. Simple assault arrest rates for female youth increased more sharply than the male youth rate from 1981-1997. From 1992-1995, while male youth arrest rates for aggravated assaults declined, rates continued to increase for female youths.[20] The national trends suggest that we should be alert for similar changes in our state.

The 1999 Youth Risk Behavioral Survey found that 7.5% of the high school students surveyed reported they had carried a weapon, such as a gun, knife, or club on school property on one or more of the past 30 days.[21] That survey did not include middle-school students, who may be at least as likely to carry weapons as high school students.

In New Hampshire, minors are not prohibited from possessing either a handgun or long guns, and parents are not required by law to keep loaded firearms out of the reach of children.[22]

4.3 Court Involved Children

Definition

Court involved children include both children in need of services and juvenile offenders.

Children in Need of Services (CHINS) are children under age 18 who are truant, who habitually run away from home or repeatedly disregard the lawful requests of parents or guardians, or who commit offenses that would be criminal violations if committed by an adult.[23] A count of CHINS "cases" is a count of charges filed in New Hampshire courts.[24] A count of individuals is a count of uniquely identifiable juveniles.[25] Rates are calculated as cases per 1,000 population.

Juvenile offenders are children who commit offenses that would be crimes if committed by an adult.[26] A count of "cases" is a count of charges filed in New Hampshire courts.[27] A count of individuals is a count of uniquely identifiable juveniles. Rates are calculated as cases per 1,000 population.

Findings

In 1998, there were 1,330 CHINS cases filed with the courts. These cases related to 937 different individuals. Of the cases, 732 dealt with boys, 591 with girls, and for 7 cases the gender was unknown.[28]

For boys, approximately 73% of all CHINS cases were filed against males ages 14-18, 22% against males ages 10-13, and 3% against males ages 0-9. For girls, 77% of the cases were filed against females ages 14-18, 16% against females ages 10-13, and 2% against females ages 0-9.

That same year, 1998, there were 7,262 juvenile cases filed with the courts. These cases related to 3,993 different individuals. Of the cases, 78% dealt with boys, 21% with girls, and 1% with individuals for whom the gender was unknown.[29]

Figures 4-8 and 4-9 display the count of both CHINS and juvenile cases for male and females offenders age 9 through 17.

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Figure 4-8 CHINS and Juvenile Cases by Age of Male Offender, 1998

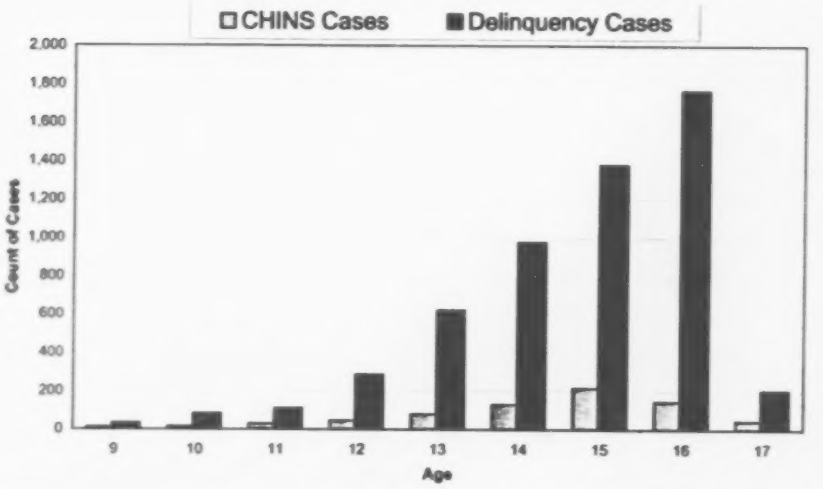
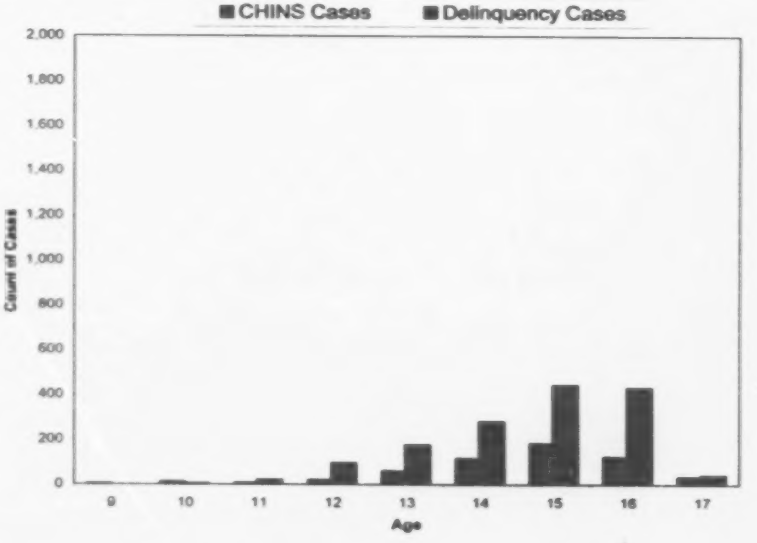


Figure 4-9 CHINS and Juvenile Cases by Age of Female Offender, 1998



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Court records also provide information on CHINS and juvenile cases by offense type and by disposition as set forth in Figures 4-10, 4-11, 4-12, and 4-13.[30] Note, however, that the court records are rife with errors. For example, with respect to CHINS cases:

- About 64% of the 1,330 CHINS cases had no offense cited.[31]
- About 16% of the 1,330 CHINS cases had no disposition recorded.[32]
- Almost 12% of the cases had neither an offense nor a disposition entered.
- Less than 33% of all the cases had both the offense and disposition entered.

With respect to juvenile cases:

- About 3.4% of the 7,232 juvenile cases had no offense cited.[33]
- About 18% of the juvenile cases had no disposition recorded.[34]
- Less than 1% of the cases had neither an offense nor a disposition entered.
- Approximately 79% of the cases had both the offense and disposition entered.

Figure 4-10 CHINS Cases by Offense Type, 1998

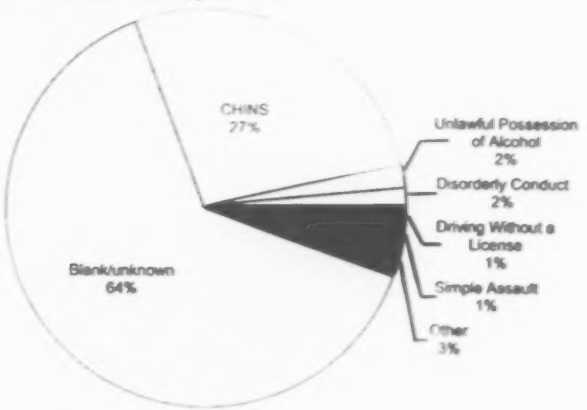


Figure 4-11 CHINS Cases by Disposition, 1998

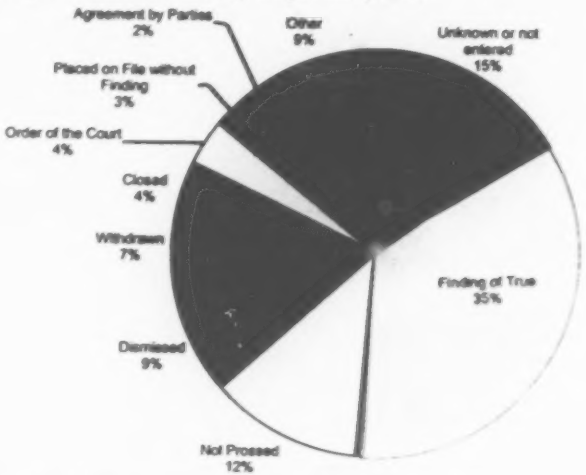


Figure 4-12 Delinquency Cases by Offense Type, 1998

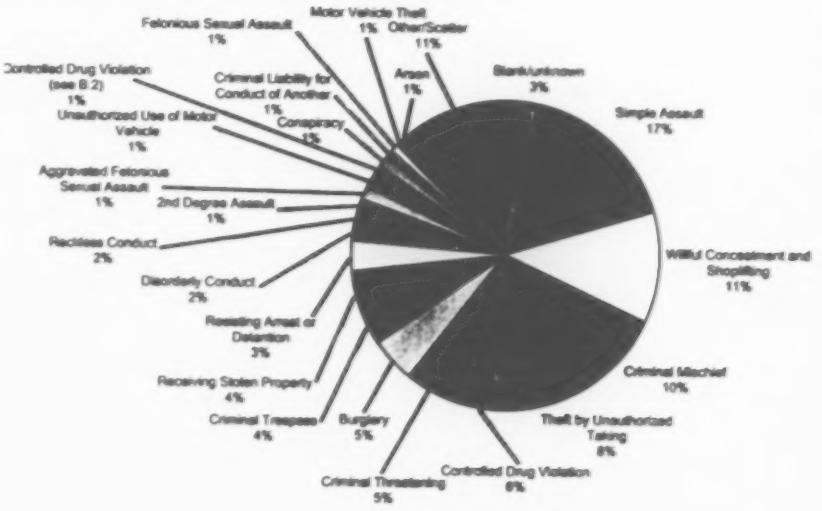
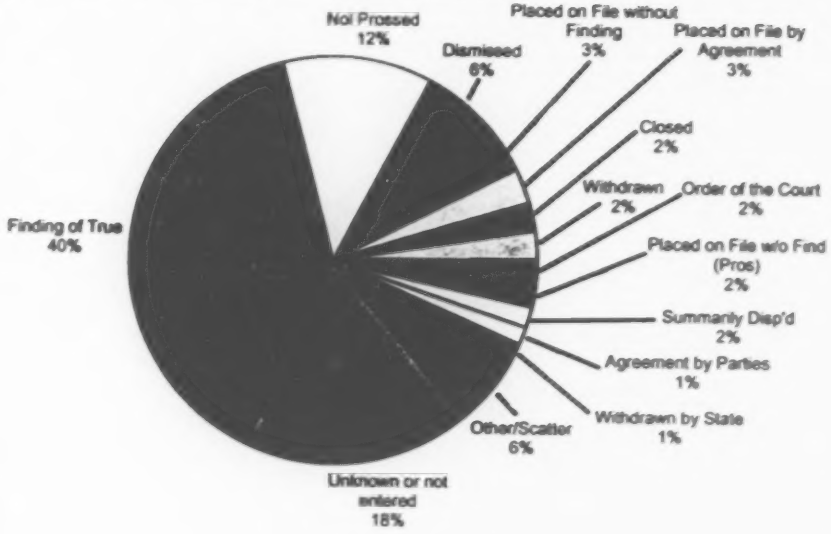


Figure 4-13 Delinquency Cases by Disposition, 1998



Analysis of the CHINS and juvenile records reveals that court cases are more likely to be filed against juvenile residents of the state's poorer communities as shown in Figures 4-14 and 4-15.[35]

Figure 4-14 CHINS Cases in the Courts, 1998

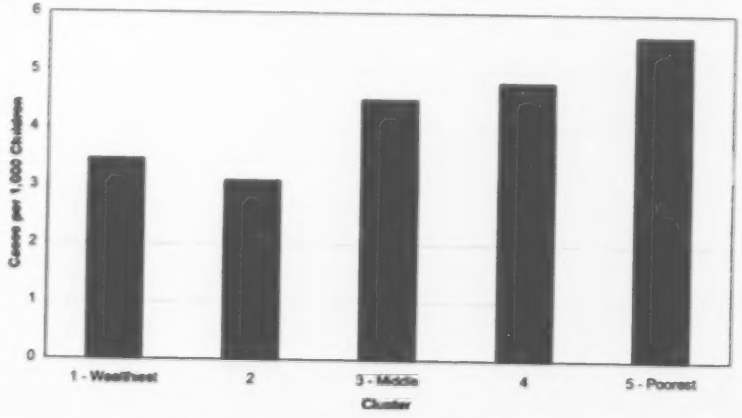
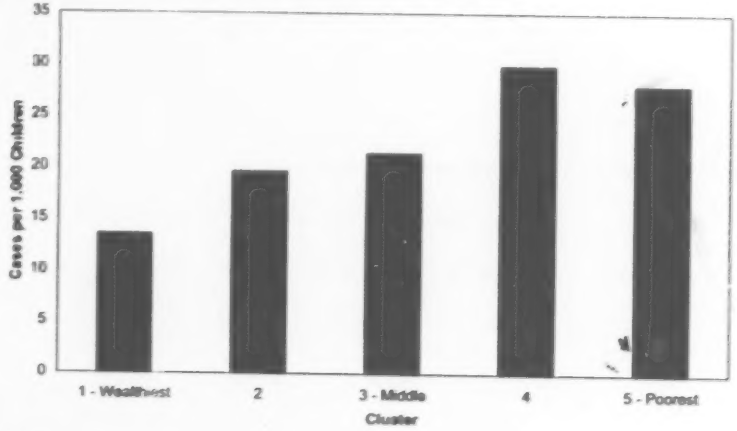


Figure 4-15 Delinquency Cases in the Courts, 1998



Significance

Unfortunately, the most salient conclusion that can be drawn from these data is the inconsistency in data collection on children in the court system. A uniform statewide data collection system is needed. At present, each court records and maintains its own data, and the process of compiling relevant information from each court is an arduous one that impedes regular statewide reporting. With a uniform reporting system, the court would be able to provide regular statistical summaries of court cases related to juvenile behavior, CHINS, and child abuse and neglect. Such data would allow for comparisons of the disposition of cases over time, by court, by offense, by gender, and by community of residence.

The second conclusion that can be drawn from this data, undermined in part by questions of data reliability, is the need to explore the relationship between community economics and court filings against our youth. As with abuse and neglect, the frequency of court filings is correlated to community economics. Yet we know that, at least in the area of abuse and neglect, the incidence of founded cases by DCYF does not correspond to community economics. Why are more court cases filed against residents of our poorer communities? Do more offenses by and against youth occur there? Are authorities more willing to intervene in families there? These important questions, and others, require more detailed and consistent data to address.

Finally, we know from research that most youth crime occurs in the after-school and early evening hours.[36] At present, New Hampshire has approximately 30,000 youth unsupervised during after-school hours– a number that jumps to 35,000 during the summer.[37] Youth who are unsupervised after school have a greater likelihood of engaging in risky activities that can lead to dropping out of school, drug abuse, teen pregnancy and illegal activities.[38] In contrast, youth that attend after-school programs and summer programs enjoy healthier social relationships and peer interactions and improved school conduct and performance.[39]

Both the public and private sectors need to devote resources in the area of after-school care to ensure that our youth receive the support they need to reach their full potential. Action steps recommended in the *Children's Agenda 2000* include:

- State and local government should support after-school-programming as a part of an adequate education.
- Communities should develop mentoring and job-shadowing programs for junior and senior high school students.
- Businesses should develop family-friendly workplaces that offer flexible scheduling.
- Communities should open public buildings, including schools, to child and youth activities.

Risk factors for court involvement include: poverty, family violence, poor school performance, substance abuse, mental illness and lack of appropriate supervision.[40]

Effective prevention strategies combine substance abuse services, mental health services, after-school programs, tutoring, mentoring, conflict resolution, vocational training, and community service.[41]

4.4 Out-of-Home Placements

Definition

Out-of-home placements count children placed by the State of New Hampshire in settings other than their own homes. This includes both children placed because of child abuse or neglect and older children placed due to delinquency or other status offenses. Rates are calculated per 1,000 population of children age 0-17.[42]

Findings

On June 30, 1999, the Department of Health and Human Services reported a total of 1,884 children who were then in state supervised out-of-home placements.[43]

The figures below show the relative percentages of all children by type of placement, the breakdown of children placed by age, and the breakdown of placement by economic cluster.[44]

Figure 4-16 Out-of-Home Placement of Children

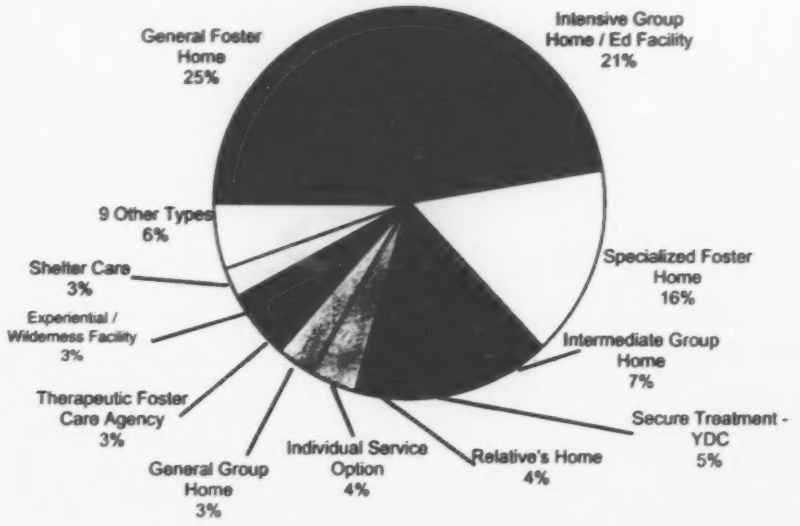

General Foster Home 25%
Intensive Group Home / Ed Facility 21%
9 Other Types 6%
Shelter Care 3%
Experiential / Wilderness Facility 3%
Therapeutic Foster Care Agency 3%
General Group Home 3%
Individual Service Option 4%
Relative's Home 4%
Secure Treatment - YDC 5%
Intermediate Group Home 7%
Specialized Foster Home 16%

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Figure 4-17 Out-of-Home Placements by Age and Gender

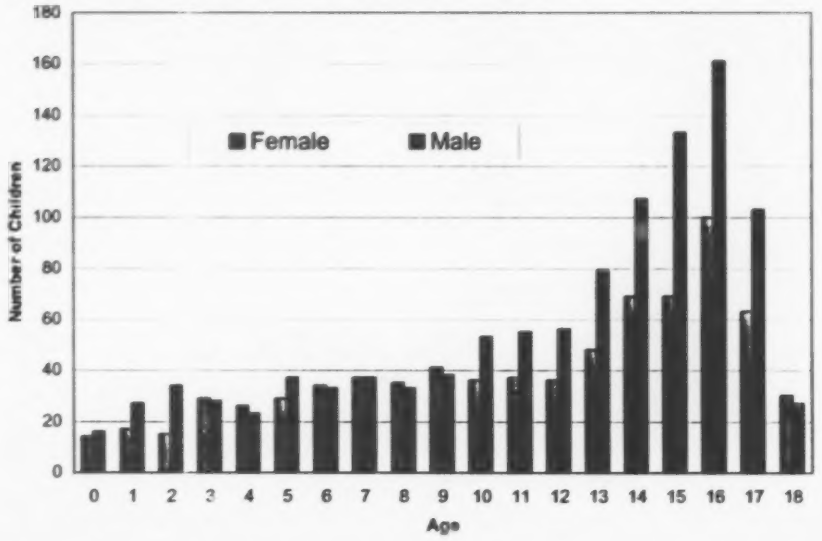
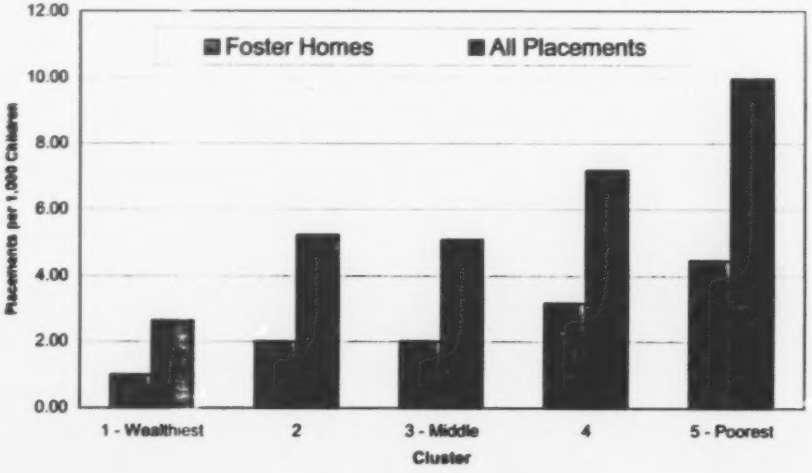


Figure 4-18 Child Placement and Economic Clusters



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Significance

While young boys and girls are equally likely to be placed outside their homes, beginning at age ten, the number of placements of boys exceeds the placements of girls by 50%. By age 15, there are twice as many placements of boys as girls.

There is a clear relationship between out-of-home placements and community economics. The 1,756 children for whom a New Hampshire town of residence was identified in the data were aggregated based on the five economic clusters. The chance that a child in one of the state's poorest communities will be placed out of his or her home by the state is nearly four times that of a child in one of the wealthiest communities. This general pattern is true for both older and younger children.[45] This pattern in New Hampshire is consistent with national data.[46]

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4.5 What We Would Like to Know About Our Children and Safety

KIDS COUNT New Hampshire has never before included a section on child safety. We determined this year to provide whatever data were available based upon our belief that knowledge of abused and neglected and court-involved children is critical to any assessment of child well being in our state. What we found was that, despite efforts by staff in both DCYF and the court system, tremendous gaps in information exist. What follows are our recommendations for change at the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Safety and the courts.

Department of Health and Human Services (DH&HS)

DH&HS has not produced an annual report on *child abuse and neglect* since 1986. DH&HS should return to its prior practice of issuing this annual report. The report should contain sufficiently detailed statistics about such matters as reporting sources, confirmation rates, regional differences, types of abuse, relationship between children and their abusers, time between reporting and disposition, and method of resolution that will allow the public and our policy-makers to have a better understanding of the problem and ensure that it is being adequately addressed.

With respect to *out-of-home placements*, DH&HS has legal responsibility for numerous children who are placed in foster homes, drug treatment programs and in other out-of-home settings. DH&HS was able to provide us with a count of children in placements of different types; however, the Department could not meet our requests for counts of children in second foster home placements or for average duration of placement. Such information should be captured and made available. Placement data should distinguish between placements made for purposes of avoiding abuse and neglect and those made for other reasons.

The Department of Safety

A return to annual reports is also recommended in the area of *juvenile arrests*. The last annual "Crime in New Hampshire" report was published by the Department of Safety in 1994, containing data for 1993. We were able to obtain simple tallies of the number of arrests of juveniles in subsequent years, but all such data have suffered from the problem that, unlike many states, New Hampshire does not require the reporting of arrests by local law enforcement agencies. Thus, data are incomplete. The problems caused by lack of mandatory reporting are summarized in the last annual *Crime in New Hampshire* report:

> *There are several important reasons why this document can only serve as a criminal activity indicator [rather than a true measure of criminal activity.] First, the submission of necessary data is done on a voluntary basis by the police agencies in the state and the number of reporting agencies often vary from year to year. Secondly, inconsistencies arise in how data is interpreted by submitting agencies that can conflict with the federal definitions.*

The State should mandate reporting of arrests by all local law enforcement agencies. The Department of Safety should resume publication of its annual reports on crime. The data on arrests should be analyzed by type of crime, age and residence of arrestee, among other factors.

Court System

The need for uniform data collection and regular reporting is most clear in the court system. At present, the accuracy of information entered is of concern, uniform reporting of information is lacking, and basic issues such as the maintenance of a single record for each offender (so that unduplicated counts may be extracted) have not been resolved. The State is in clear need of uniform definitions and standards so as to produce useful information on how children and youth are involved in the courts. In particular, the court system should produce regular statistical summaries of the cases courts are handling with regard to juvenile behavior (criminal and CHINS) and child abuse and neglect so that the number of cases over time, by court, and by offense may be compared. The court should coordinate its data system with the "Bridges" data system in DH&HS. In future years, once these systems are integrated, analysis of their data could lead to significant insights into how to improve the State's response to child abuse and neglect and youth antisocial behavior.

CHAPTER 5
Education

5.1 Third Grade Academic Proficiency

Definition

Third grade academic proficiency is measured by the scaled scores of third grade students in language arts and math on the New Hampshire Education Improvement and Assessment program (NHEIAP).[1] The scaled scores published by the Department of Education are "the mean scaled scores of all the students for the school/district at that grade level." Scores between 200-239 are ranked as novice achievement, scores between 240-259 are ranked as basic achievement, scores between 260-279 are deemed proficient, and scores between 280-300 reflect advanced achievement.

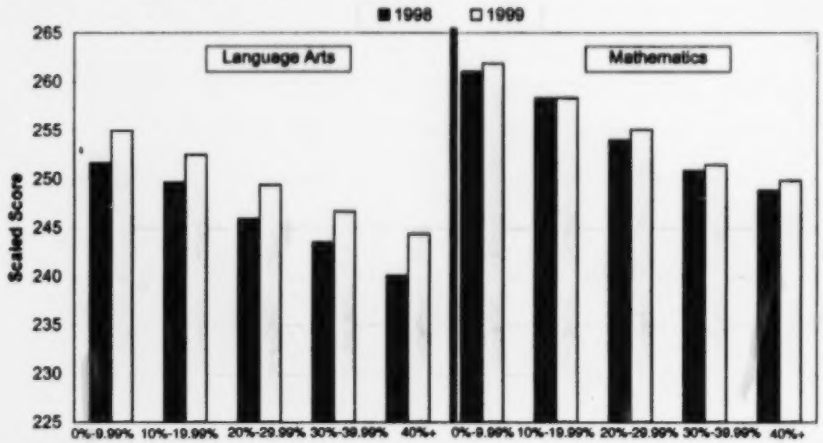
Findings

In 1999, statewide results for third graders reflected small gains over 1998. The state average scaled score in language arts improved from 248 to 251 (both scores in the basic range); math scores improved from 256 to 257 (also in the basic range).

Locally, the scores of some schools increased and others decreased. More schools improved their scaled score in language arts than improved in mathematics. Improvement was not particularly related to how well a school's students did in 1998. The lower performing schools were just as likely to increase or decrease their scores as the higher performing schools.[2]

In contrast to the lack of correlation between improvement in scores and past performance, a strong correlation does exist between average scaled scores and community economics. Figure 5-1 shows the scaled scores of schools grouped by percentage of students in each school receiving free or reduced-price school lunches.[3] Schools serving a higher percentage of lower-income families tend to have lower average scores.[4]

Figure 5-1 Average NHEIAP Scaled Scores



Of the 60 elementary schools with *fewer than 10% of their students receiving free or reduced price meals*, only 10 had language arts scaled scores below the state average and only 11 had below average scores in math. Of the 35 schools with *more than 40% of their students receiving free or reduced price meals*, only 7 had a language arts score that was above average, and only 8 had above average math scores.[5]

State averages do not, however, tell the whole story. Figures 5-2 and 5-3 are scatter charts that display each of the 245 elementary schools for which both 1999 NHEIAP third grade scaled scores and 1997 school lunch data were available. These charts show the large variation of scaled scores among schools serving similar percentages of low-income households. There are some schools with more than 40% of their student populations eligible for free and reduced-price meals that have higher average scores than other schools with fewer than 10% of their students so eligible.[6]

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Figure 5-2 Scaled Third Grade Mathematics Scores of NH Public Elementary Schools

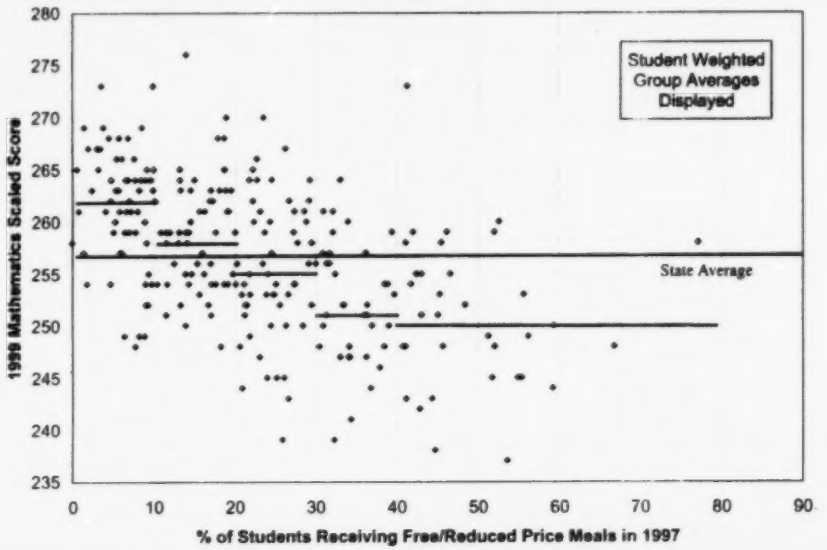
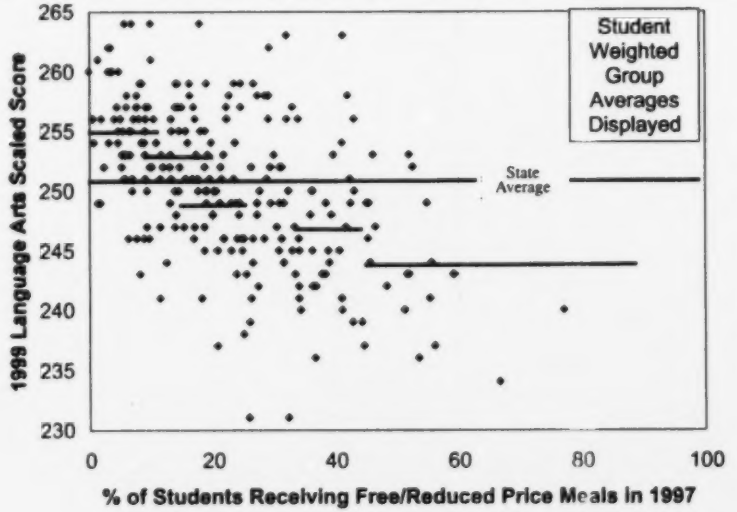


Figure 5-3 Scaled Third Grade Language Arts Scores of NH Public Elementary Schools



Significance

Community economics are closely tied to, but not the sole predictor of, academic proficiency scores. Assessment of schools should take into account a number of issues, including:

- how an individual school compares to the state average;
- how results in an individual school change over time;
- how a school compares to a sub-group of schools serving reasonably comparable populations.

Responsibility for such analysis and reporting lies with the New Hampshire Department of Education. Recent legislation requires the Department to produce a "report on the condition of education statewide and on a district-by-district and school-by-school basis." Analysis such as that begun here should be an important component of such a report. Additionally, the reasons for different results among schools serving similar populations should be investigated. Program, staffing, and administrative differences should be recorded and investigated to determine which, if any, school-based practices lead to higher student achievement.[7] The lessons learned from the higher performing schools may well shed light on the resources needed to provide an adequate education.

5.2 Reading Ability of Fourth Graders

Definition

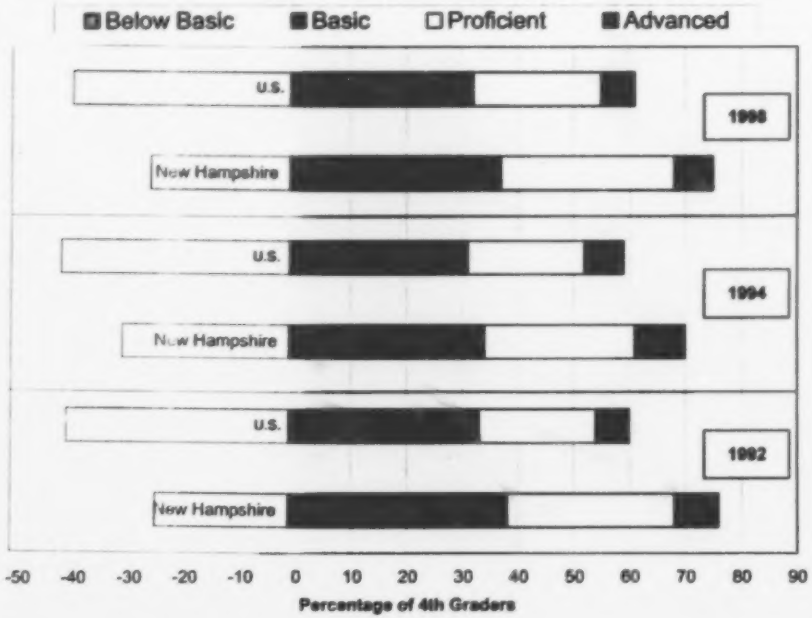
Reading ability of fourth graders measures the percentage of fourth grade students able to read and understand passages at defined proficiency levels on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) standardized tests.[8]

Findings

As part of the NAEP, a sample of approximately 2,000 New Hampshire fourth graders took tests of their reading ability in 1998, 1994 and 1992.[9] Students are scored in a manner similar to that of New Hampshire's own NHEIAP testing program; each student is designated as being in the Below Basic,[10] Basic,[11] Proficient,[12] and Advanced[13] category. A single scaled score is also calculated for each student and averages are derived from the scaled scores.

In comparison to other states, New Hampshire's fourth grade readers do very well. Scores from the 1998 fourth grade test (NAEP), rank New Hampshire second in the nation, behind Connecticut, and in line with neighbors Maine and Massachusetts (Vermont schools did not participate). Thirty-eight percent of the sample of New Hampshire fourth graders scored at or above the proficient level in 1998, 1994, and 1992. The New Hampshire results are displayed in Figure 5-4 and compared to the national average.[14]

Figure 5-4 4th Grade NAEP Reading Achievement

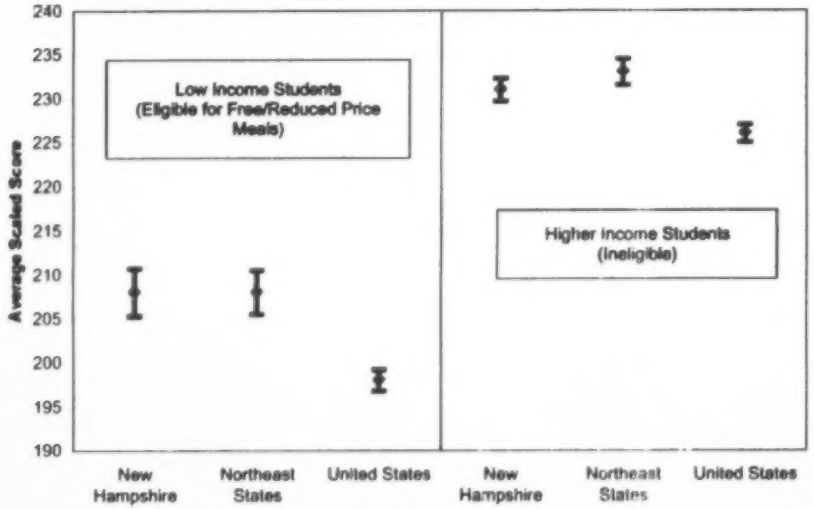


The NAEP test provides data on the impact of family, school, and peers on school performance.

With respect to families, the NAEP data reveals that (1) income, (2) education, (3) mobility, (4) frequency of family discussions about school studies, and (5) the literary climate of the home all affect school performance.

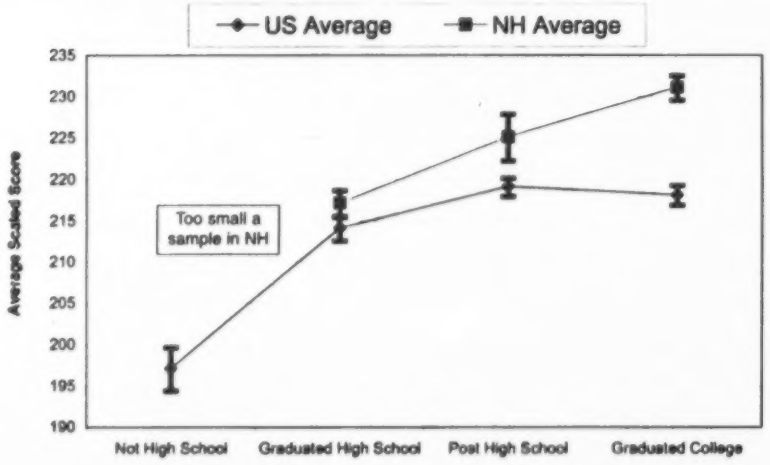
Family income is clearly related to average student reading performance. Students from families with income low enough to qualify them for free and reduced-price school meals have lower average scaled scores than the students from higher-income families as shown in Figure 5-5. Of note is that, in contrast to our strong national and regional showing, New Hampshire students with higher incomes scored lower than similarly situated students in the Northeast.

Figure 5-5 1998 4th Grade Reading Scaled Scores



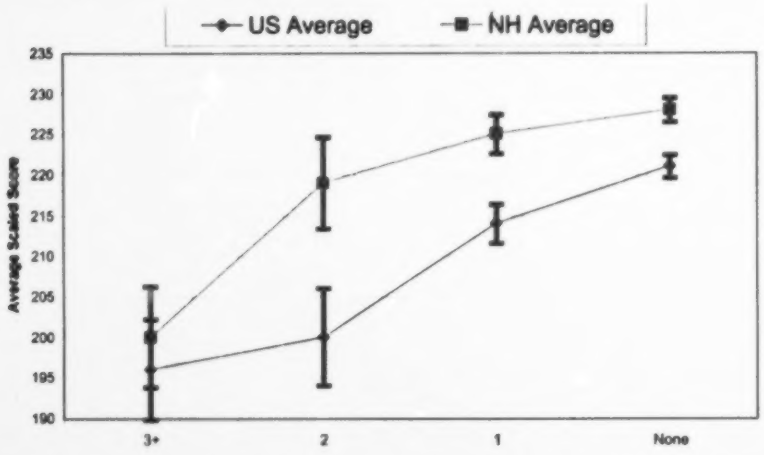
The level of education of the parent(s) of fourth graders is also strongly related to their average score. As shown in Figure 5-6, the more educated the parents, on average, the better the students are able to read. In all categories, New Hampshire students do better than their national counterparts. This difference was most pronounced, however, at the higher education levels.

Figure 5-6 1998 NAEP 4th Grade Reading Average Scores: Highest Level of Education Completed by a Parent



Family mobility is another factor that impacts school performance as measured by the NAEP. Students who have changed schools more often have lower average reading scores than those who have had a more stable school environment. Changes in schools from second through fourth grade are almost entirely attributable to families who move. Students in the New Hampshire sample who did not change schools had an average scaled reading score that was 28 points higher than those who changed schools three or more times, as seen in Figure 5-7.

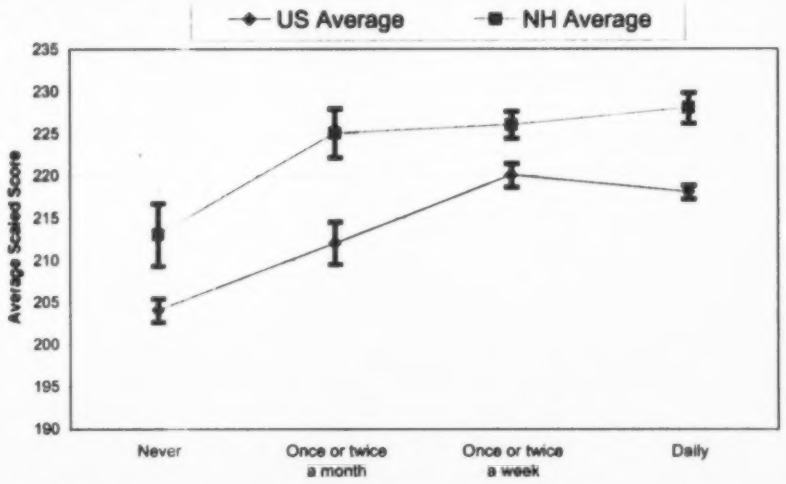
Figure 5-7 1998 NAEP 4th Grade Reading Average Scores: How Often Student Changed Schools in the Past 2 Years



Students who more frequently discuss their school work at home are more likely to have better reading skills than those who do so less frequently, as shown in Figure 5-8. Nationally, 18% of fourth graders say they never discuss their studies at home. In New Hampshire, only 12% are in this situation.

Finally, the literacy climate of the home plays a role in how well students perform on the test. The students in the New Hampshire sample who have an encyclopedia at home had an average score of 228, while those who do not had an average score of 215. Similarly, students who receive magazines regularly at their homes scored an average 230, whereas students who do not scored 212. Nationally and statewide, students who choose to read for fun outside of school perform better than those who do not, with those New Hampshire students who do so daily scoring 19 points higher than those who never do so.

Figure 5-8 1998 NAEP 4th Grade Reading Average Scores: How Often Student Discussed Studies at Home



School factors that impact NAEP performance include the amount of reading assigned and the length of writing assignments. Figure 5-9 shows that those students who read ten or fewer pages a day in school and for homework do not fare as well as those who read eleven or more. It also indicates that there is little difference once students reach the eleven-page level. New Hampshire students do better than the national average at all levels of reading. In any given demographic group, however, students who are assigned little reading do not do as well as those who are required to read more than ten pages a day in school and for homework.

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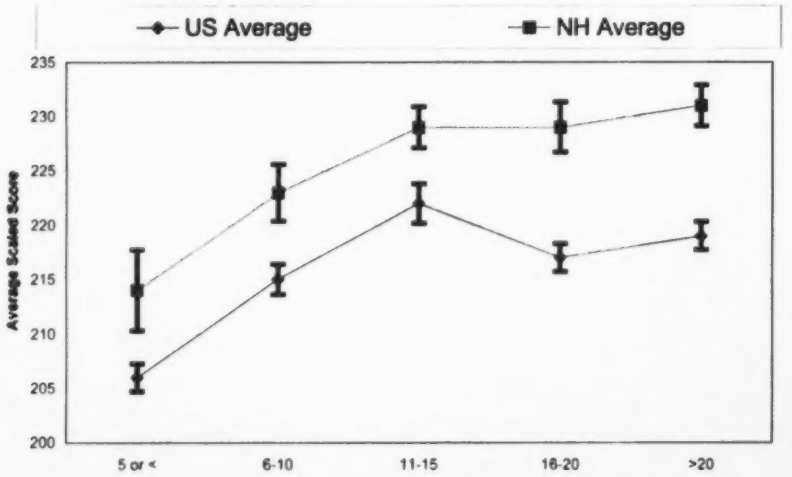
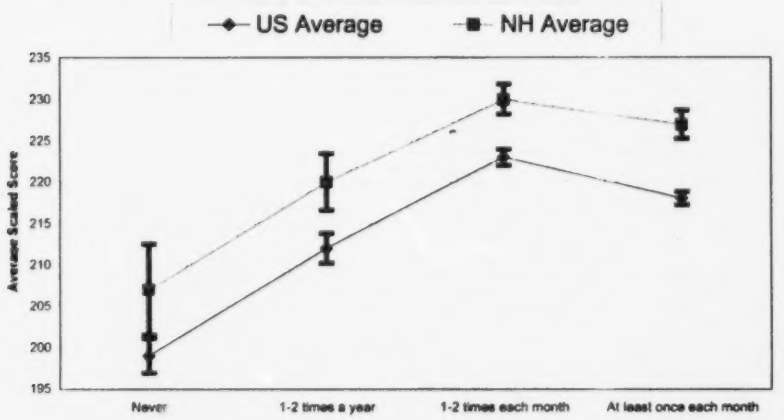
Figure 5-9 1998 NAEP 4th Grade Reading Average Scores: Number of Pages Read in School and for Homework Each Day



The regularity with which students are asked to write long answers to questions about their reading is also related to reading achievement, as seen in Figure 5-10.

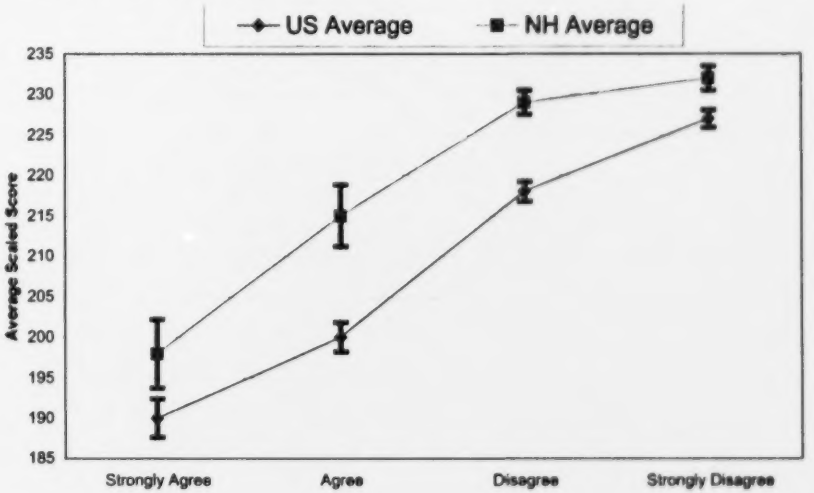
Figure 5-10 1998 NAEP 4th Grade Reading Average Scores: How Often Do You Have to Write Long Answers to Questions About Your Reading?



There are other school-based factors that do *not* appear to be consistently related to differences in reading performance. Among these are: how often students do group projects related to their reading, whether reading is aloud or silent, and whether the library is used for doing school assignments, for borrowing books, for using computers, or as a place of quiet study.

Finally, there are **non school-based and non-family based factors** that relate to reading achievement, such as the attitude of peers. The attitude toward school by friends is strongly related to the student's reading ability. Those fourth graders who report that their friends make fun of those who try to do well in school have much lower average scaled reading scores than those whose friends are more positive in offering support and reinforcement. In the New Hampshire sample, 17% of the students agree or strongly agree with the statement, "My friends make fun of people who try to do well in school."

Figure 5-11 1998 NAEP 4th Grade Reading Average Scores: My Friends Make Fun of People Who Try to do Well



Education

Significance

This detailed analysis of the reading ability of New Hampshire fourth graders shows that:

- Schools can make a difference in fourth graders' average reading abilities by providing adequate opportunities to read (eleven or more pages a day) and writing at length about their reading (once or twice a month).

- Factors external to the school are also critically important. The home environment (parents' education, family income, access to magazines and books, regularity of discussing school work at home, consistency of residence) is directly related to fourth graders' reading abilities.

- The positive or negative attitudes of close friends and peers are also strongly associated with reading ability.

Raising the level of reading competency is achieved by designing programs that reflect the interrelationships between school, home, and peers.

5.3 Tenth Grade Academic Proficiency

Definition

Tenth grade academic proficiency is measured by the scaled scores of tenth grade students on the New Hampshire Education Improvement and Assessment program (NHEIAP).[15] NHEIAP tests for tenth graders assess language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.[16] The scaled scores published by the Department of Education are "the mean scaled scores of all the students for the school/district at that grade level." Scores between 200-239 are ranked as novice achievement, scores between 240-259 as basic achievement, scores between 260-279 as proficient, and scores between 280-300 as advanced achievement.

Findings

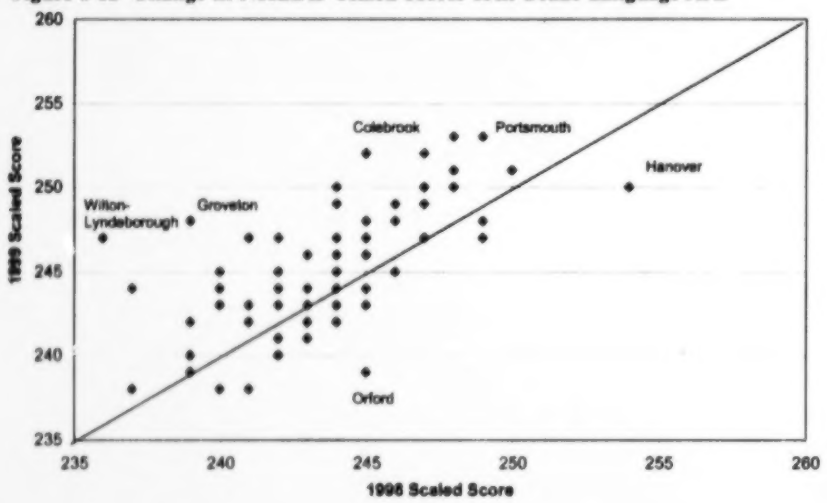
Tenth grade results showed small gains in 1999 over 1998. The state average scaled score in language arts, mathematics, and social studies improved by 2 points each, while science remained the same. The scores of some schools increased and others decreased.

Figure 5-12 is a scatter plot that displays each high school's language arts score as a single dot. Dots above the diagonal line are schools with higher scaled scores in 1999 than 1998. Dots below the line are schools where the scaled score declined. A few schools with large increases or decreases are labeled.

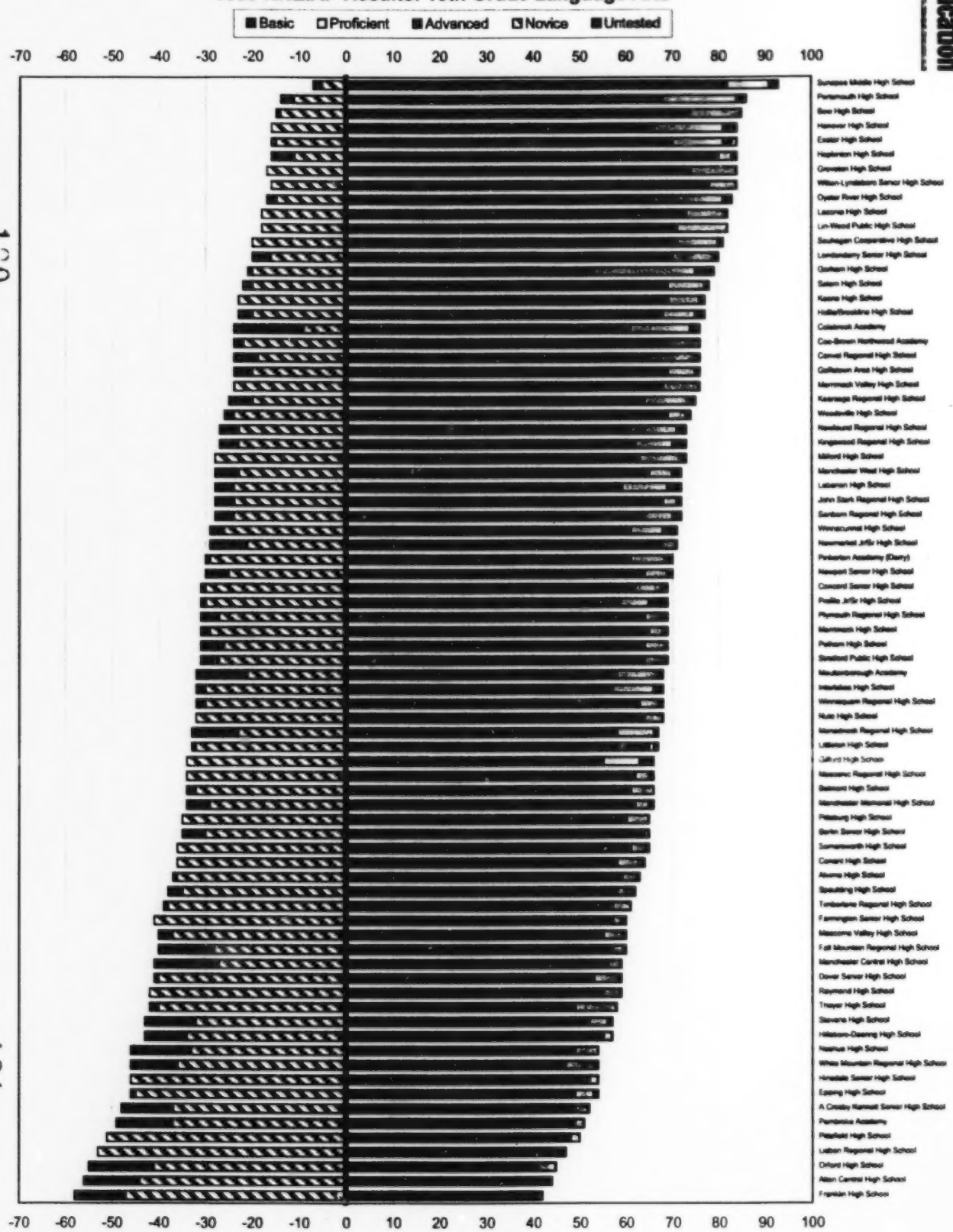
The range of scaled scores among schools is quite small. For example, the range in language arts scores from lowest scoring to highest scoring high school was only 18 points in 1998 and 15 points in 1999.

There is, however, a large difference among the numbers of students achieving different levels of proficiency among the high schools. Figure 5-13 illustrates the percentage of tenth grade students in each school in 1999 who reached each of the proficiency levels in language arts. Students who were not tested or who were only in the "novice" category fall to the left of the baseline, while students scoring basic, proficient, and advanced fall sequentially to the right of the baseline. The schools are ordered from high to low on the basis of the percentage of students scoring basic and above.

Figure 5-12 Change in NHEIAP Scaled Scores 10th Grade Language Arts

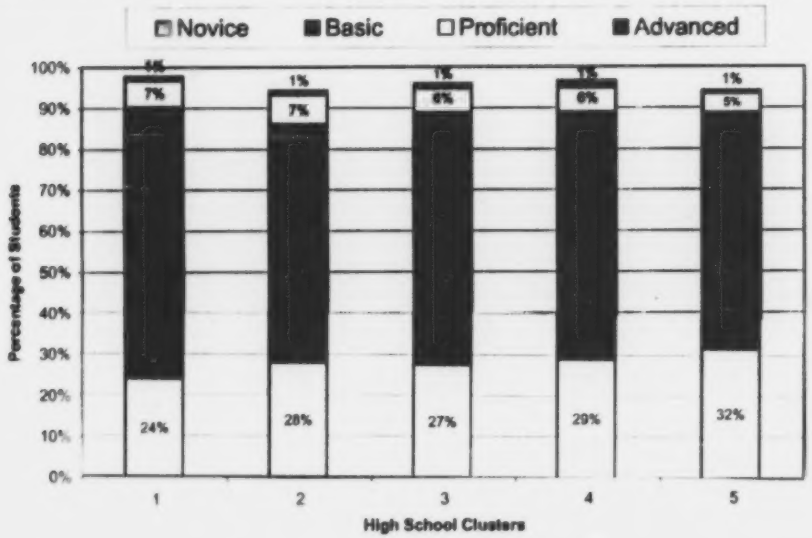


1999 NHEIAP Results: 10th Grade Language Arts



There appears to be some relationship between high schools and economic cluster and test results.[17] Figure 5-14 charts that relationship.[18]

Figure 5-14 1999 NHEIAP Results 10th Grade Language Arts by High School Economic Clusters



Significance

That there is some connection between community economics and high school clusters and the NHEIAP results is demonstrated by the fact that students attending high schools in the "wealthier" clusters are slightly more likely to fall in the basic and proficient categories than in the novice category when compared to the students in the "poorer" clusters. And seven of the ten schools that had the lowest percentage of students scoring in basic and above were in the poorest economic cluster.

However, some high schools serving some of our poorest communities scored in the top 20.[19] This raises the question of what programs and approaches those schools have that may be contributing to the academic competency of their students. As with the third grade scores, answers to these questions would help the state determine the resources needed to provide an adequate education.

5.4 High School Dropout Rate

Definition

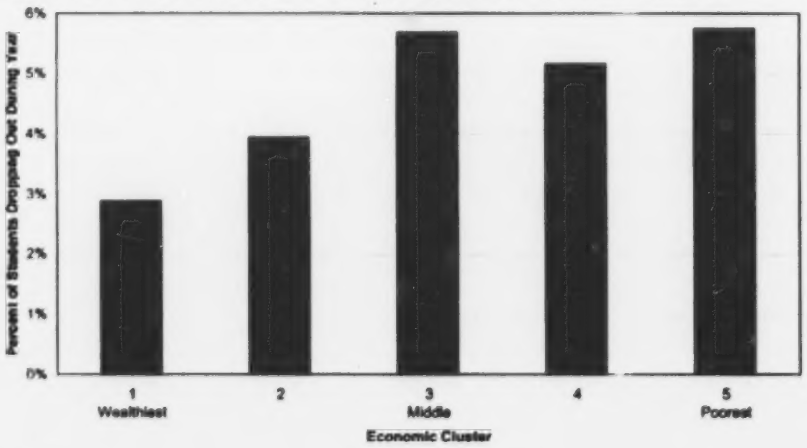
High school dropout rate is the percentage of students registered in grades 9-12 in a given school who withdraw during a given school year.[20]

Findings

In the 1997-98 school year, 2,676 of the 56,878 students enrolled in 76 of New Hampshire's 78 public high schools withdrew without completing their high school education.[21] This is an average dropout rate of 4.7%, slightly less than the 4.9% of two years before. The rate was highest in Newport, where more than 10% of the students dropped out during the year, and lowest in Wilton-Lyndeboro, Durham, and Hanover, where less than 1% of the students dropped out during the year.[22]

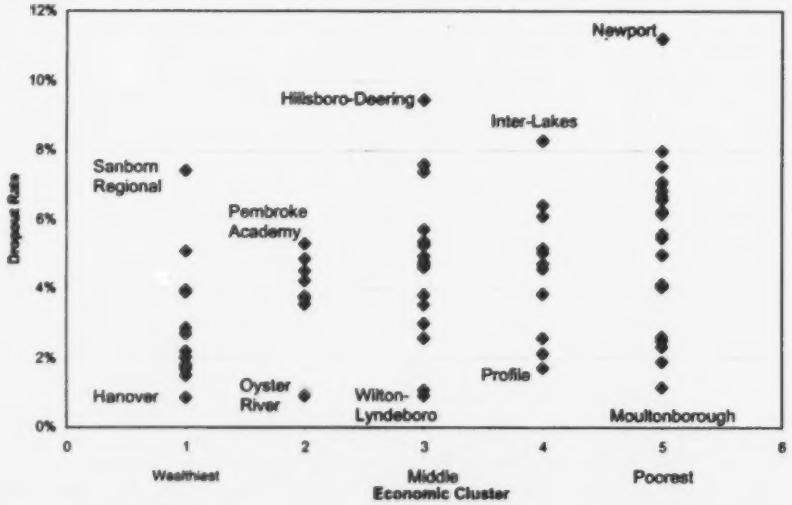
The percentage of youth that choose to leave high school early is related to the economic context of the communities in which they live. Figure 5-15 displays the single-year dropout rate for each of the five clusters of high schools. Youth in the two wealthier clusters have greater success in completing their high school education than those in the middle and poorer clusters. The average dropout rate of schools in the poorest cluster is twice that of communities in the wealthiest cluster.

Figure 5-15 1997-1998 Dropout Rates by High School Economic Cluster



Within each cluster there are wide differences among schools. Figure 5-16 illustrates this, each dot representing a high school's dropout rate within its respective economic cluster. The schools with the highest and lowest dropout rates in each cluster are labeled.

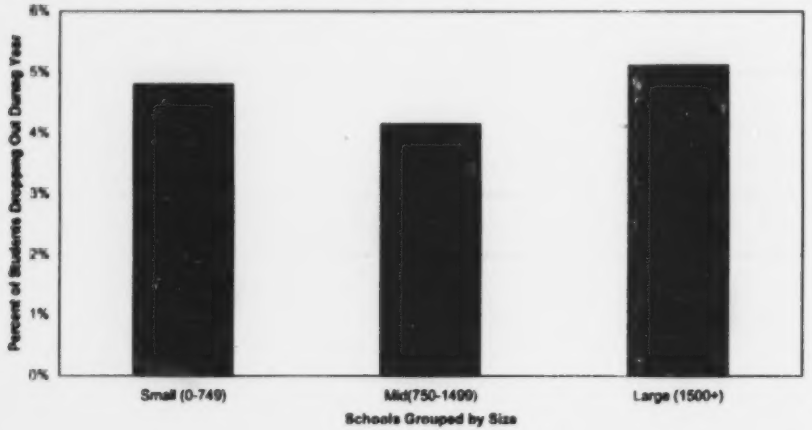
Figure 5-16 1997-1998 High School Dropout Rates by High School Economic Cluster



As shown in Figure 5-17, there is not a strong or consistent difference in dropout rates among schools of different size. The dropout rates vary little, with slightly higher than average rates in the smallest (under 750 registered students) and largest (1500 or more) schools.

Teens from poorer communities are more likely to drop out of school.

Figure 5-17 1997-1998 Dropout Rates by School Size



Significance

Without a high school degree, individuals are at a great disadvantage in our technology-driven economy, which requires a highly skilled labor force. According to the U.S. Department of Education, high school dropouts are more likely than high school graduates to earn less money in low-end, dead-end jobs, receive public assistance and, particularly if female, become single parents in their teens. High school dropouts also represent a disproportionate number of inmates in correctional facilities.[23]

There is a clear relationship between community economics and high school dropout rates. Such a relationship threatens to perpetuate the cycle of poverty – as youth from poorer communities who drop out wind up in low paying jobs. But there are signs of hope – instances where the dropout rate is not as clearly linked to community economics. We need to explore why dropout rates in some of the wealthier schools are high and why dropout rates in some of the poorer schools are low. Are there programs or approaches in particular schools that are making the difference for teens? The answers are critical to ensuring that our schools continually increase the percentage of teens that complete high school and therefore enter the adult world with a more promising future.

Early warning signals for school dropouts include: poor grades, inability to read at grade level, poor attendance, and behavioral problems.[24]

Effective dropout prevention programs link the student to broad community supports.[25]

5.5 Post-High School Plans

Definition

Post-high school plans counts the number and percentage of students who have graduated from high school and have indicated their plans for post-secondary education or employment.

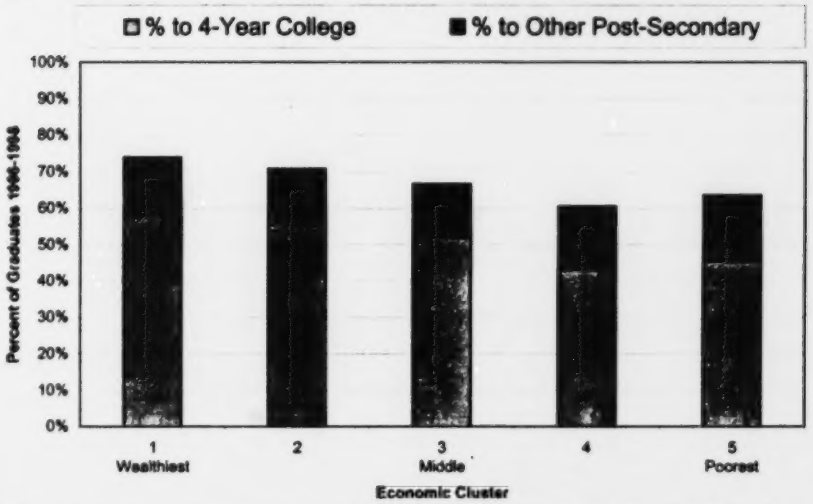
Findings

According to statistics published by the New Hampshire Department of Education, 52% of New Hampshire's 1998 public high school graduates planned to attend a four-year college. An additional 16% planned to attend some other post-secondary education, including two- and three- year programs. Thus, just over two-thirds of all recent public school graduates planned to further their education in some way.[26]

Between the two periods, 1991-1995 and 1996-1998, there has been an increase in the percentage of students planning to attend four-year colleges after graduation. The state average increased 4%, from 48% to 52%. The state average in students planning to attend some form of post-secondary education also increased 4%, from 64% to 68%. Some schools stand out as having greatly increased numbers of students now planning to attend four-year colleges, up by 10% or more in some cases.[27] Other high schools have increased by more than 10% in the number of graduates pursuing some form of post-secondary education.[28]

The economics of the communities that a school serves are related to how many students plan to go on to a four-year college, as shown in Figure 5-18. A nearly equal percentage of students from each economic cluster planned to attend other post-secondary programs in 1996-1998. With respect to college plans, however, the percentages vary by cluster, from an average of 58% planning to go on to a four-year college program in the wealthiest cluster to an average of 43% and 45% in the two poorest clusters.[29]

Figure 5-18 Plans for Post-Secondary Education by School Economic Cluster

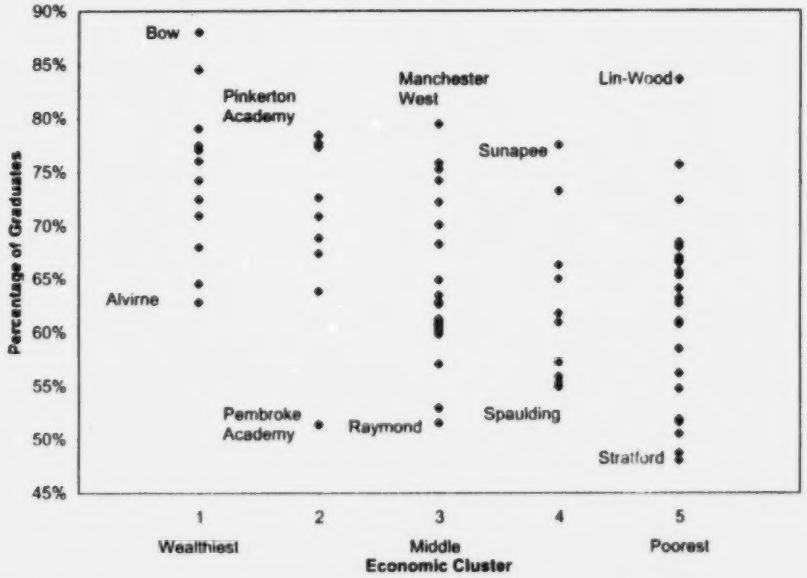


There are, however, differences between communities of similar profiles. Figure 5-19 displays a dot for each school in each cluster and labels the highest and lowest school for each cluster. It shows quite a few high schools in the wealthiest cluster that have lower percentages of graduates planning to obtain further education than some schools in the poorest cluster. The range within each cluster is about 35%.

128

129

Figure 5-19 Students Planning to Attend Post-Secondary Education, 1996-98



Significance

There is an encouraging, albeit small, increase in students from all economic clusters planning to attend four-year colleges between 1991-1995 and 1996-1998. As with national trends, wealthier communities in New Hampshire had a larger percentage of students planning to attend a four-year college than poorer communities.

It is important to look at individual schools where the percentage of graduates with plans for higher education has jumped considerably. What is happening in the communities and schools with higher ranks in each cluster that may not be happening in those that rank low? While it would not be fair to compare the situation at Stratford High School to that at Bow High School, it does seem reasonable to make a comparison between Stratford and Lin-Wood High School given their comparable socioeconomic characteristics.

Finally, we must continue to support programs that expand access to post-secondary education and increase student aspirations for continuing education. This, of course, includes programs to help with the cost of college education, which is well beyond the means of many low-income families.

5.6 What We Would Like to Know About Our Children and Education

This chapter on education provides more information on student performance than past editions of *KIDS COUNT New Hampshire*. Given the current focus on defining an adequate education and the grounding of that discussion in measurable outputs such as test scores and dropout rates, the data are of heightened importance. What follows are suggestions for improvement – suggestions that will necessitate additional resources to ensure that improved data collection does not come at a cost to other core functions of the Department of Education.

First, with respect to *testing*, the NHEIAP testing process should collect more information, similar to that collected by the NEAP national tests, so that characteristics of students who do well and schools that do well could be closely analyzed by the Department of Education. The Department of Education has informed us that, beginning in December of 2000, school district profiles will compare NHEIAP results among schools serving similar communities. This practice will allow for a meaningful way for the public to compare statistical results and will provide tools to help improve our public schools. With respect to the NAEP, New Hampshire should participate in the national testing process and the Department of Education should analyze and make available the results relative to factors that are related to higher achievement among New Hampshire students in all tested subjects at all grade levels. Finally, with respect to the SAT, the Department of Education should compile information on the numbers and percentages of students at each public high school who take the SAT exams in anticipation of applying for college. Such information, which the Department indicates will be included in the school profiles available in December of this year, should come from the national database of the College Board.

Second, with respect to *dropout* data, the Department is in the process of changing the way in which it collects information on dropouts and graduates. Such change is welcome, because the existing data are not accurate or comparable from district to district. Information on each school dropout should be submitted to the Department of Education, which should then publish annual statistics and profiles of the dropout population. Good data here should lead to better dropout prevention programs.

Third, with respect to *special education* data, the Department's SPEDIS database of special education students is capable of producing much more useful information than we were able to obtain. The Department should prepare regular quarterly and annual public reports that provide statistics on counts and cost of special placements of special education students. These should include counts by town as well as district, counts of newly added students by grade level, and counts of cases by cost category and by disability code.

Fourth, with respect to the *cost per pupil for education*, the data on school district budgets currently collected on an annual basis by the Department of Education should be broken down on a per pupil basis so that each district can see its expenditure pattern in light of those of comparable districts. At present, significant types of expenditures are excluded from the published per pupil expenditure figures. The Department should revise and expand its calculations comparing school expenditures so that such questions as how much is being spent per pupil for textbooks and building maintenance in each district can be answered. The full costs of transportation, out-of-district tuition, and debt service should be built into per pupil figures used to compare districts.

Finally, the Department of Education should explore compiling information on *local commitment to education*. Such information might include: teacher turnover rate, salary scale indicators, volunteer time in schools, student participation in special academic events, among others. Much of this information requires data not actively collected by the Department of Education from local school districts. The Department, together with major stakeholders in public education, should develop such a measure as part of its "School Report Card," required under RSA 193E.

Sources

Introduction

1 *1999 Kids Count Data Book: State Profiles of Child Well Being*, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD (1999).

2 The *Children's Agenda 2000* may be accessed on our web site, www.childrennh.org, or may be ordered in hard copy by contacting the Children's Alliance of New Hampshire.

Chapter One

1 *1999 Kids Count Data Book: State Profiles of Child Well Being*, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD (1999).

2 The Office of State Planning calculates annual estimates of population by town, but not by age for each town. The U.S. Bureau of the Census prepares annual estimates of population by age but not for each town. Using these two different sets of data, it is possible to make an approximate estimate of the percentage of population that is children in each economic cluster. The data used here are the Census projections for 2000 and the Office of State Planning estimates for 1997. Recognizing the different years involved and the fact that both sets of data are estimates, the resulting percentages should not be over-interpreted. A table with the breakdown of children among the five economic clusters is available on the Children's Alliance web site.

3 *1999 KIDS COUNT Data Book: State Profiles of Child Well Being*, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD (1999).

4 1970 population figures are from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Statewide population estimates and projections by age and gender are extracted from the data file of the Census Bureau:
www.census.gov/population/www/projections/styrby5.html.

5 The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that the net natural increase in New Hampshire's population (births less deaths) was 58,347 during this period while net migration (in-migration less out-migration) contributed 36,602. Total births were 142,027, while total population increase was 91,882.
U.S. Bureau of the Census:
www.census.gov/population/estimates/state/st-99-2.txt

6 1997 is the most recent year for which there are complete data.

7 Hodgkinson, Harold L., *A Demographic Look at Tomorrow*, Institute for Educational Leadership, Center for Demographic Policy, Washington, D.C. (1992).

8 The original source of the data in this table is the annual Current Population Survey (CPS) of the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The data may be found at the Annie E. Casey Foundation web site: www.aecf.org/kidscount/kc1999/rawdata.htm. Due to the small sample size of New Hampshire households in the CPS, a three-year rolling average for New Hampshire is used in an attempt to mute the effect of sampling error. Yet error remains. In the figure, each New Hampshire data point is bound by upper and lower limits in which it is 95% probable that the actual figure for the state's total population lies.

9,10 Birth data by town taken from 1970 through 1991 annual reports of the New Hampshire Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics and from computer data files provided by the Health Statistics and Data Management Section, New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (July 1999).

11 Almost 75% of children living in single-parent families will experience poverty for some period during the first ten years of life—compared to only 20% for children living in two-parent families. Horn, Wade, *Father Facts*, National Fatherhood Institute, Lancaster, PA (1995).

12 *Analysis of Census Bureau's Income and Poverty Report for 1998*, Center for Budget and Policy Priorities (October 1, 1999).

13 *1999 Kids Count Data Book: State Profiles of Child Well Being*, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD (1999).

14 See Appendix A.

15 This translates into a statewide rate of 19.25 children per thousand involved in divorce. The national rate of children involved in divorce in 1980 (at the height of the divorce rates in the country) was 17.3 per thousand. *Youth Indicators*, National Center for Education Statistics, Washington, D.C. (September, 1996); *Divorce Rates in Families With Children*, Americans for Divorce Reform, Arlington, VA (2000).

16 We sought to obtain current data by town of residence (of the primary custodial parent) to update this analysis; however, DHHS staff indicated that such data is no longer available.

17, 18, 19 Schwartz, M.A. and Scott, B., *Marriages and Families: Diversity and Change* (1999).

20 McLanahan, S. and Sandefur, G., *Growing Up with a Single Parent* (1994) as quoted in *Kids Count Special Report–When Teens Have Sex: Issues and Trends*, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD (1999).

21 Benson, P.L., and Rochlkepartain, E.C., *Youth in Single Parent Families Risk and Resiliency* (1993).

Chapter Two

1 All data presented in Figure 2-1 from the Current Population Survey (CPS) of the U.S. Bureau of the Census. That data may be found on the Annie E. Casey Foundation web site at
www.aecf.org/kidscount/kc1999/rawdata.htm.

2 1996 is the most recent year for reliable data based upon the use of five-year averages from the Current Population Survey. The 1996 data is an average of yearly rates from 1994-1998.

3 The Standard of Need establishes the official figure, sanctioned by the legislature, of the minimum income required to raise a family in healthful conditions in New Hampshire. The standard is based upon a market basket study mandated by Chapter 390 of the Laws of 1989 and submitted to the General Court in 1991. Bailis, Lawrence Neil and Burbridge, Lynn, *Report on Cost of Living and AFDC Need and Payment Standard Options*, Brandeis University and Wellesley College (July, 1991).

4 The phrase is taken directly from the market basket study referenced in endnote 3.

5 The U.S. Bureau of the Census calculates PCI for each town in New Hampshire every ten years. In between census years, the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration updates the town PCI figures on an annual basis. The "adjusted per capita income" set forth in Figure 2-2 is based upon a calculation of per capita income using non-group quarters population only. Using group quarter adjusted PCI allows us to define the number of residents in a community without counting residents of nursing homes, college dormitories, county jails, the state prison, or other group quarters. For the most part, individuals living in group quarters have little, if any reportable income and therefore they dilute the PCI, making its calculated value lower than what would really reflect the true incomes of what most people would consider to be the true residents of the community. For most towns the group living quarters adjustment makes little difference; however, there are sixteen towns with more than 10% of their population in group living quarters. A complete listing of those towns is available on our web site. The adjusted PCI figures are important to consider whenever the state disperses aid based on town finances.

6 Appendix A.

7 *Investing the Surplus: An Opportunity to Reduce Child Poverty*, News and Issues, National Center for Children in Poverty (Summer 1999).

8 *Poverty Matters: The Cost of Child Poverty in America*, Children's Defense Fund (1997).

9 Helms and Company, RKM Research and Wallner, Mary Jane, *Child Care in New Hampshire*, Providian National Bank, Concord, NH (1999).

10 *Id.*

11 *Id.*

12 See Appendix A.

13 *Id.*

14 *1997 Profile of New Hampshire and its Eighteen Labor Market Areas Employment and Wage Data*, New Hampshire Department of Employment Security (June 1999).

15 One way that individuals compensate for low wages is to seek multiple jobs. Thus, our index is not meant to be a measure of a final gap in aggregate wage income, although it does approximate that. A wage structure that requires large numbers of individuals to hold multiple jobs in order to maintain sufficient family income, however, does have detrimental side effects on family life.

16 The complete data for all five economic clusters is available on the Children's Alliance web site.

17 *1999 KIDS COUNT Data Book: State Profiles of Child Well Being*, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD (1999).

18 *Educational Attainment in the United States: March 1997*, Current Population Reports, Census Bureau, Washington, D.C. (May 1998).

19 In 1995, to meet a request of *KIDS COUNT New Hampshire*, DH&HS prepared a special report counting AFDC children by town for the month of October, 1995.

20 In 1999, again to meet a request of *KIDS COUNT New Hampshire*, DH&HS prepared a special report counting TANF, Food Stamp, and Medicaid children for the month of August 1999.

21 In the DH&HS data, a count of "cases" may include more than one child. There is no regular monthly data on the count of children receiving cash assistance.

22 Calculated from 2000 population projection for each town, U. S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. (March 29, 1999).

23 *The State of America's Children Yearbook 1999*, Children's Defense Fund, Washington, D.C. (1999).

24 Primus, Wendell, Rawlings, Lynette, Larin, Kathy, and Porter Kathryn, *The Initial Impacts of Welfare Reform on the Incomes of Single Mother Families*, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Washington, D.C. (August 22, 1999).

Chapter Three

1 All trend lines calculated by Microsoft Excel as best fit to data displayed. Table of birth rates in all five economic clusters can be found on the Children's Alliance web site.

2 Between 1989 and 1992, Medicaid eligibility changed from 75% of the federal poverty level for pregnant women and children under two years of age to 150% for pregnant women and children under one year of age and 133% for children ages one to six. Since July of 1994, eligibility has been increased to 185% for pregnant women and children up to age nineteen. *Schedule of Medicaid Eligibility Changes*, Bureau of Maternal and Child Health, Division of Public Health Services, Department of Health and Human Services, Concord, NH.

3 *Trends in the Well Being of America's Children and Youth*, Child Trends, Inc. and the U.S. Census Bureau, Office of the Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. (1997).

4 Brown, Sarah S., *Including Children and Pregnant Women in Health Care Reform, Paying Attention to Children in a Changing Health Care System*, National Academy Press, Washington, D.C. (1996).

5 *Health Insurance Coverage and the Uninsured in New Hampshire*, Office of Planning and Research, New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Concord, NH (1999).

6 *1997 Healthy Kids Annual Report*, Florida Healthy Kids Corporation, Tallahassee, FL (February 1997).

7 *Health Insurance Coverage and the Uninsured in New Hampshire*, Office of Planning and Research, New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Concord, NH (1999).

8 A table of low birthweight infants by economic cluster is available on the Children's Alliance web site.

9 *Infant Health Improving*, Children's Defense Fund Reports, Vol. 17, No. 12, Children's Defense Fund, Washington, D.C. (November 1996).

10 *Id.*

11 Lewit, E., Schuurmann, L., Baker, H., Corman, P., Shiono, H., *The Direct Cost of Low Birthweight*, The Future of Children, Vol. 5, No. 1, Center for the Future of Children, David and Lucille Packard Foundation, Los Altos, CA (1995). Web site: www.futureofchildren.org/lbw/index.htm.

12 Data on low birthweight babies by economic cluster are available for each economic cluster from 1970 to 1997. The data may be accessed on the Children's Alliance web site.

13 *1999 KIDS COUNT Data Book: State Profiles of Child Well Being*, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD (1999).

14 A full table of births to teen mothers by economic cluster is available on the Children's Alliance web site.

15 *When Teens Have Sex: Issues and Trends, KIDS COUNT Special Report*, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD (1999).

16 *Trends in Teen Sexual Activity: Pregnancy and Births December 1998*, Child Welfare League of America, Washington, D.C. (1998).

17 *The State of America's Children Yearbook 1995*, Children's Defense Fund, Washington, D.C. (1995).

18 *Children 1999*, Child Welfare League of America, Washington, D.C. (1999).

19 *When Teens Have Sex: Issues and Trends, KIDS COUNT Special Report*, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD (1999).

20 *1999 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results*, New Hampshire Department of Education, Concord, NH (December, 1999). The 2,213 responses represent only about 4% of all high school students in 1999. The survey was not a scientific random sample of high school students. The report cautions, therefore, that "the results should not be generalized to other students in New Hampshire."

21 *We Need to Talk: Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Problems in New Hampshire 1998*, New Futures, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH (December 1998).

22 *Sex and America's Teenagers*, Alan Guttmacher Institute, New York, NY (1994).

23 *Youth Drug Use: A Problem with Profound Implications*, America's Drug Use Profile, Office of National Drug Policy, Washington, D.C. (1999). Web site: www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov.

24 *Id.*

25 *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Young People: A Report of the Surgeon General*, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA (1994). Web site: www.cdc.gov/epo/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00030927.htm.

26 *Great Transitions: Preparing Adolescents for a New Century*, Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, New York, NY (1995).

27 *1999 KIDS COUNT Data Book: State Profiles of Child Well Being*, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD (1999).

28 *World Health Report 1999: Basic Indicators for All Member States*, World Health Organization, Statistical Annex (September 1999). Web site: www.who.org/whr/1999/en/indicators.htm.

29 *The State of the World's Children: 1999*, United Nations Children's Fund, New York, NY (1999). Web site: www.unicef.org/sowc99/sowc99a.pdf.

30 Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Wonder" online data search of the data set "Compressed Mortality" found at web site: www.cdc.gov/nchs/datawh/cdcwond/cdcwond.htm. These national data report only 788 deaths among

Sources

those ages 0-19 from 1993 through 1997. These state data report 931 deaths over the same period among those ages 0-18.

[11] *Firearms and Adolescents*, Pediatrics, Vol. 89, No. 4, Committee on Adolescents, American Academy of Pediatrics (April 1997). Web site: www.aap.org/policy/04711; *Suicide and Suicide Attempts in Adolescents and Young Adults*, Pediatrics, Vol. 81, No. 2, Committee on Adolescents, American Academy of Pediatrics (February 1998).
Web site: www.aap.org/policy1954.html.

[12] *Impaired Driving, Injury, and Trauma & Alcohol and Other Drugs*, Making the Link Series, National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, Rockville, MD (Spring, 1995). Web site: www.health.org/pubs/makelink/ml-injur.htm; Werner, Mark, J. and Hoover, Adger, Jr., *Early Identification and Intervention for Adolescent Alcohol Use*, Adolescent Health Update, Vol. 10, No. 1, American Academy of Pediatrics (October 1997).

Chapter Four

[1] The legal definition is found at NH RSA 169-C:3.

[2] A "referral" is any report of possible child abuse and neglect received by the Department of Health and Human Services. If a referral contains information that indicates a credible concern of suspected child abuse or neglect, the referral is assigned to a local field office for an "assessment," legally termed an "investigation." If, as a result of an investigation, the Department of Health and Human Services "finds probable cause to believe that the child who is the subject of such report is abused or neglected" the case is categorized as "founded." A single referral, assessment or founded case may involve one or more children, depending on the situation. Therefore, a count of cases is not equivalent to a count of individual children.

[3] Court activity is measured in two ways: a count of cases and a count of households. A count of "cases" is a count of petitions filed in New Hampshire district courts or in the family division. Each petition is limited to one child and one charge of abuse or neglect. One adult may be accused of the abuse and neglect of one child– which would translate into two separate court petitions, one for abuse and one for neglect. Thus, the definition of a "case" in the court system is quite different from that used by the Department of Health and Human Services described in the preceding endnote and the count of court "cases" will be quite larger than the count of "cases" by DH&HS. Neither DH&HS cases nor court cases provide a count of children.

A count of "households" is a count of uniquely identifiable persons/families. The count is an attempt to provide an unduplicated count. Because of the way the courts manage their data system, however, this should be considered only a good estimate. It is not possible to ferret out all duplicate "cases" affecting the same family or household. Rates are calculated as cases per 1,000 population.

[4] At our request, the Department prepared a summary data file on all referrals determined to require an assessment during 1998 and a separate file on all cases determined to be founded during the same year.

[5] It should be noted that it is not correct to say that 10.4% of the assessments were founded cases. This is because not all of the 666 founded cases were among the 6,391 reports. Some cases that had initially been established for assessment in late 1997 appear in the total of founded cases for 1998 but not among the assesments for 1998. Similarly, some assessments begun in late 1998 would not have been determined to be founded or unfounded until some time in 1999, and thus do not appear in the 1998 founded totals.

[6] A chart of towns for which 30 or more assessments were begun in 1998 is available on our web site.

[7] The categories in the pie chart are defined as follows:

- *Founded Court Action* means that legal action was taken and a court agreed that there had been child abuse or neglect.
- *Founded Services Only* means that no court action was involved, that the children involved remained at home, and that the parents/caretakers agreed to the Department's recommendations for services or resolution of the situation.
- *Founded Problem Resolved* means that children are sufficiently protected from repetition of the abusive/neglectful situation such that no court petitions are filed and there is no further state involvement.
- *Founded Case Opened* means that the case was determined to be founded, and has been opened, but the method of resolution has not yet been determined.

According to a DH&HS communication in January 1999, there were more than 19 cases "Founded, Services Only" but they had been "inadvertently entered" in their database as "Founded, Case Opened." The exact number of incorrectly entered cases is not known. Therefore, caution should be used in interpreting this material.

[8] All data in this section was taken from a computer file provided by the Administrative Office of the Courts in August 1999. The file contained 9,514 "cases" relating to children from 37 district and family courts. Of these cases, 8,856 were regarding persons for whom New Hampshire was indicated as their state of residence. Others related to persons who were residents of other states or for whom no state of residence was identified in the database.

[9] Of the 146 child abuse cases, 69 were filed against men and 75 against women (there were two for whom gender is unknown). Of the 768 child neglect cases, 384 were filed against men and 372 against women (and 6 were unknown). Counts by gender should be taken as very good estimates, not exact counts. The courts do not record the gender of defendants. The Administrative Office of the Courts, however, went through a lengthy process of comparing the first name of defendants against the use of the same name in birth certificates issued over many years. They then imputed a gender to each defendant. This process may have introduced a small number of errors and left some defendants with a gender of "either" which we have listed as "unknown."

[10] The full table of court cases of abuse and neglect by economic cluster may be found at the Children's Alliance web site.

[11] *America's Children at Risk: A National Agenda for Legal Action*, American Bar Association, Working Group on the Unmet Legal Needs of Children and their Families, Chicago, IL (1993); *Protecting Children from Abuse and Neglect*, The Future of Children, Vol. 8, No. 1, Center for the Future of Children, the David and Lucille Packard Foundation, Los Altos, CA (Spring 1998); *Hidden Casualties: The Relationship Between Violence and Learning*, National Health and Education Consortium, Washington, D.C. (1995).

[12] *Id.*

[13] For some of the listed offenses, juveniles are not actually "arrested" under the law. The New Hampshire Department of Safety, however, reports all detention of juvenile and adult offenders as "arrests." We use the Department's definition as they compile the data.

[14] *Summary Report of Students Disciplined Under Gun-Free Schools Act*, provided by Gary Guzouskas, New Hampshire Department of Education (July 30, 1999).

[15] Under the federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 and New Hampshire RSA 193:13, each such incident must result in expulsion from school. Reporting of each incident and associated expulsion is required.

[16] Sinclair, Beth, *et al.*, *Report on State Implementation of the Gun-Free Schools Act - School Year 1996-97*, Final Report, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. (1998). Web site:
www.ed.gov/pubs/gunfree/gunfree.pdf.

[17] Data for this section are taken from *State Juvenile Arrest Report, 1996*, Uniform Crime Reporting Subsystem, New Hampshire Department of Safety, computer printout dated September 9, 1997.

[18] The 2,346 arrests of juvenile males for "other offenses" includes 22 separately identified categories that total 619 arrests, each contributing only a small number. These named categories include, for example, 2 for murder, 19 for possession of opium/cocaine, 25 for forcible rape, and 52 for robbery. The remaining 1,727 "other offenses" are identified in the Department of Safety report only as "other non-traffic offenses." Among the 742 "other offenses" among females, there were 169 spread among 16 different named offenses. Examples include 10 for forgery or counterfeiting, 2 for carrying or possessing weapons, 12 for driving under the influence, and 8 for robbery.

The remaining 573 "other offenses" are identified in the Department of Safety report as "other non-traffic offenses."

19 DuRant, Robert H., et al., *Weapon Carrying on School Property Among Middle School Students*, Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, Vol. 153, No. 1 (January 1999).

20 Snyder, Howard N. and Sickmund, Melissa, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report*, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. (September 1999). Web site: www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/nationalreport99

21 *1999 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results*, New Hampshire Department of Education, Concord, NH (1999).

22 *New Hampshire State Firearms Laws*, Laws of States, Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, Washington, D.C. (March 31, 2000). Web site: www.handguncontrol.org/database/law.asp

23 For legal definition see State of New Hampshire, NH RSA 169-D:2.

24 A child may have more than one charge filed with a court and thus be counted by the court data system as multiple "cases." A count of "cases" is, therefore, not an unduplicated count.

25 The count of "individuals" is an attempt to provide an unduplicated count. Because of the way the courts manage their data system, however, this should be considered only a good estimate.

26 For legal definition of juvenile offenders see NH RSA 169-B:2 IV.

27 As in CHINS cases, a child may have more than one charge filed with a court and thus be counted by the court data system as multiple "cases." A count of "cases" is, therefore, not an unduplicated count.

28 A table of all CHINS cases by age and gender in 1998 is available on our web site. Some of the ages provided are clearly in error– listing ten children over age 18 and 32 children with no age. This calls into question the accuracy of the ages even in the age range that one might expect (10-17).

29 As with the CHINS cases, much of the court data for delinquency has errors. The full listing of delinquency cases by age and gender in 1998 is provided on our web site. Twenty-seven of the cases list ages of 18-98 years old. Such errors call into question the accuracy of the ages even in the age range that one might expect (10-17).

30 A table listing all cases by offense and disposition is provided on our web site.

31 A more detailed investigation made it clear that the lack of offense is related to procedures at individual courts. Of the 125 CHINS cases in the Nashua District Court, only 1 had no offense entered. Of the 73 cases in the Concord District Court, only 2 had missing offense entries. However, of the 78 cases in the Keene District Court, none had offense entries and in Manchester District Court only 1 of the 144 cases had an offense entered.

32 Superficially, this might be explained by cases that had not been disposed of by the end of the year. However, such is not the case. Of the 209 cases that had no disposition entered, 123 did have a date of disposition entry. In those cases, it is clear that while the case was disposed of, no record was made of the disposition itself. Further, this information also shows great variation from court to court. Of the 144 cases in Manchester District Court, 81 had no recorded disposition. Of the 15 in Southern Carroll County District Court, 12 had no disposition entry. More complete were the Plymouth Family Division where all of the 45 cases had disposition entries and Hooksett District Court where 58 of the 62 cases had disposition entries.

33 While this data is clearly more complete than that for CHINS cases, here too there is a relationship to procedures at individual courts. For example, of the 818 delinquency cases in the Manchester District Court and the 699 cases in the Nashua District Court, every one had a citation of an offense; however, of the 131 cases in the Plymouth Family Division, 26 had no cited offense and of 192 cases in the Merrimack District Court, 33 had no cited offense.

34 As with the equivalent CHINS data, this is not explained by cases that had not been disposed of by the end of the year. Of the 1,304 cases that had no disposition entered, 781 did have a date of disposition entry. In those cases, it is clear that while the case was disposed of, the disposition itself was not recorded. Further, this information also shows great variation from court to court. For example, of the 818 cases in Manchester District Court, 525 had no recorded disposition (64%); of the 185 in Southern Carroll County District Court, 121 had no disposition entry (65%). More complete were the Rochester District Court data where only 12 of the 479 cases lacked a disposition entry (3%) and Keene District Court where only 5 of 292 cases lacked disposition entries (2%).

35 A complete table of CHINS and juvenile cases by economic cluster is available on our web site.

36 Chaiken, M.R., *Issues and Practices in Criminal Justice: Kids, COPS, and Communities*, National Institute of Justice and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. (June 1998).

37 *School Age & Care Programs*, Governor's KIDS Cabinet Plan 2000, Concord, NH (2000).

38 *A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in the Nonschool Hours*, Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, Carnegie Corporation (1992).

39 *Fact Sheet on School-Age Children*, National Institute on Out-of-School Time, Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA (November 1997).

40 Snyder, Howard N. and Sickmund, Melissa, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: A National Report*, Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. (1995). Web site: www.ncjrs.org.

41 *Combatting Violence and Delinquency: The National Juvenile Justice Action Plan*, Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington, D.C. (1996).

42 Derived from Year 2000 population projections by age made by the U.S. Bureau of the Census at web site: www.census.gov/population/projections/state/stpjage.txt.

43 All data in this section are derived from a Microsoft Excel data file "Cntdetl.xls" prepared by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services specifically for this report. Data in this file had to be "cleaned" before it could be used for analysis. Errors existed with respect to gender, town of residence and state of residence.

44 In addition to the placements through age 18 displayed in Figure 4-18, there were 25 placements of 19-year-olds, 9 of 20-year-olds, 1 of a 21-year-old, one of a 23-year-old, and two of 99-year-olds (evidently signifying unknown age).

45 A table of placements by type and cluster is available on our web site.

46 *America's Children at Risk: A National Agenda for Legal Action*, Working Group on the Unmet Legal Needs of Children and their Families, American Bar Association, Chicago, IL (1993).

Chapter Five

1 There were 16,946 third grade students in public schools in May, 1999. Of these, 96% took the language arts test and 98% took the mathematics test.

2 Tables displaying the change in each elementary school's scores from 1998 to 1999 are displayed on our web site.

3 Free and reduced price school lunches are available to students at public schools. Family income determines a child's eligibility and parents sign their children up for the program. Each school has some percentage of students who apply and are determined to be eligible to participate. The percentage of students who receive free and reduced-price lunches at a school reflects the economic condition of the families that the school serves. Figures for each school are taken from "New Hampshire Department of Education Free and Reduced Lunch Percentages" dated December 3, 1997. There are a few exceptions to schools that link free and reduced-price lunch to ability to pay. For example, the Monroe School District offers free lunches to all students regardless of income. As parents

Sources

do not apply, the school reports none eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

[4] A table of data from which this graph is created is available on our web site.

[5] Tables with the 1999 NHEIAP language arts and math average scores of all schools, with the percentage of students receiving free and reduced-price meals at each school listed, are provided on our web site.

[6] For example, in language arts, the following schools with 40% and above of students receiving free and reduced-priced school lunches had average scores between 247-250 (below the state average and yet still above a significant number of schools from wealthier communities): Bluff School, Woodland Heights Elementary, Pleasant Street School, Conway Elementary School, Hilltop School, School Street School and Warren Village School. The following schools with less than 10% of the students receiving free and reduced-price meals had average scores below 247 on language arts and thus below the scores of schools from the poorest communities: Salisbury Elementary School, Webster Central School, Weston School, Walpole Middle School, and Smyth Road School.

In math, the following schools with 40% and above of students receiving free and reduced price school lunches scored between 255-255 (below the state average and yet still above a significant number of schools from wealthier communities): Woodman Park School, Richards School, Woodland Heights Elementary, Warren Village School, Walpole Middle School, Marlborough Elementary School, and Ossipee Central School. The following schools with less than 10% of the students receiving free and reduced-price meals had average math scores below 253 and thus below the scores of schools from the poorest communities: Daniel J Bakie School, Maple Avenue School, Salisbury Elementary School, Weston School, Smyth Road School and Webster Central School.

[7] The Department of Education should be provided sufficient resources to conduct this kind of action research as soon as possible.

[8] The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a federal program that tests samples of students in many states to measure their level of achievement. New Hampshire has participated in this program for some years. The results of the NAEP are valid at the state level and allow comparisons to other states within a specified range of error. The sampling process, however, does not allow for comparison between school districts.

[9] *NAEP 1998 Reading State Report for New Hampshire*, The Nation's Report Card, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. (March 4, 1999). Web site: www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/tables/index.shtml.

[10] Not able to read at the Basic level.

[11] "Should demonstrate an understanding of the overall meaning of what they read. When reading text appropriate for fourth graders, they should be able to make relatively obvious connections between the text and their own experiences and extend the ideas in the text by making simple inferences."

[12] "Should be able to demonstrate an overall understanding of the text, providing inferential as well as literal information. When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, they should be able to extend the ideas in the text by making inferences, drawing conclusions, and making connections to their own experiences. The connection between the text and what the student infers should be clear."

[13] "Should be able to generalize about topics in the reading selection and demonstrate an awareness of how authors compose and use literary devices. When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, they should be able to judge text critically and, in general, give thorough answers that indicate careful thought."

[14] As the scores reported are the results of samples, they are necessarily estimates of the results of the corresponding student populations. Complete analysis requires consideration of the standard error which measures the uncertainty that another sample of students drawn from the same population could have yielded somewhat different results. In Figures 5-5 through 5-11, the standard error is reflected with vertical brackets.

[15] Observers of the tenth grade testing, comments made by some tenth graders who have completed the tests, and analysis of results all indicate that some students do not take the test seriously because they know it will have no effect on their school grades. While this weakness of the NHEIAP test does not occur in the lower grades, it is also true that the weakness should affect all results from all schools about equally. Therefore, results of the tenth grade NHEIAP are still useful for comparative purposes.

[16] There were 14,210 tenth grade students in public schools in May, 1999. For each subject 94-96% of the students took the test.

[17] For an explanation of economic clusters as they relate to high schools, please see Appendix C.

[18] Scores on mathematics, science, and social studies are similar to the language arts scores.

[19] These schools are listed in tables on our web site.

[20] The dropout data presented in this section has limitations. The Department of Education report collects only the number of students (by grade, gender and race) who drop out during the school year. The report does not include students who finished the school year but did not return in September.

[21] Data are taken from a New Hampshire Department of Education data file on school dropouts that did not contain data for Pittsburg High School or Kearsarge Regional High School. Further, dropout data for the three Manchester high schools are provided individually, but are aggregated by the Department. We therefore imputed the average Manchester rate to each of the three schools. The Department is now engaged in a study to revise the definitions and methods of collecting dropout information from New Hampshire's public schools.

[22] Analysis by school would improve if dropout rates were averaged over four or five years.

[23] Kaufman, Phillip, et al., *Dropout Rates in the United States, 1998 Statistical Analysis Report*, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. (November 1999).

[24] *1995 KIDS COUNT Data Book: State Profiles of Child Well Being*, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD (1995).

[25] *Success in School: Education Ideas that Count, supplement to KIDS COUNT Data Book 1997: State Profiles of Child Well Being*, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD (1997).

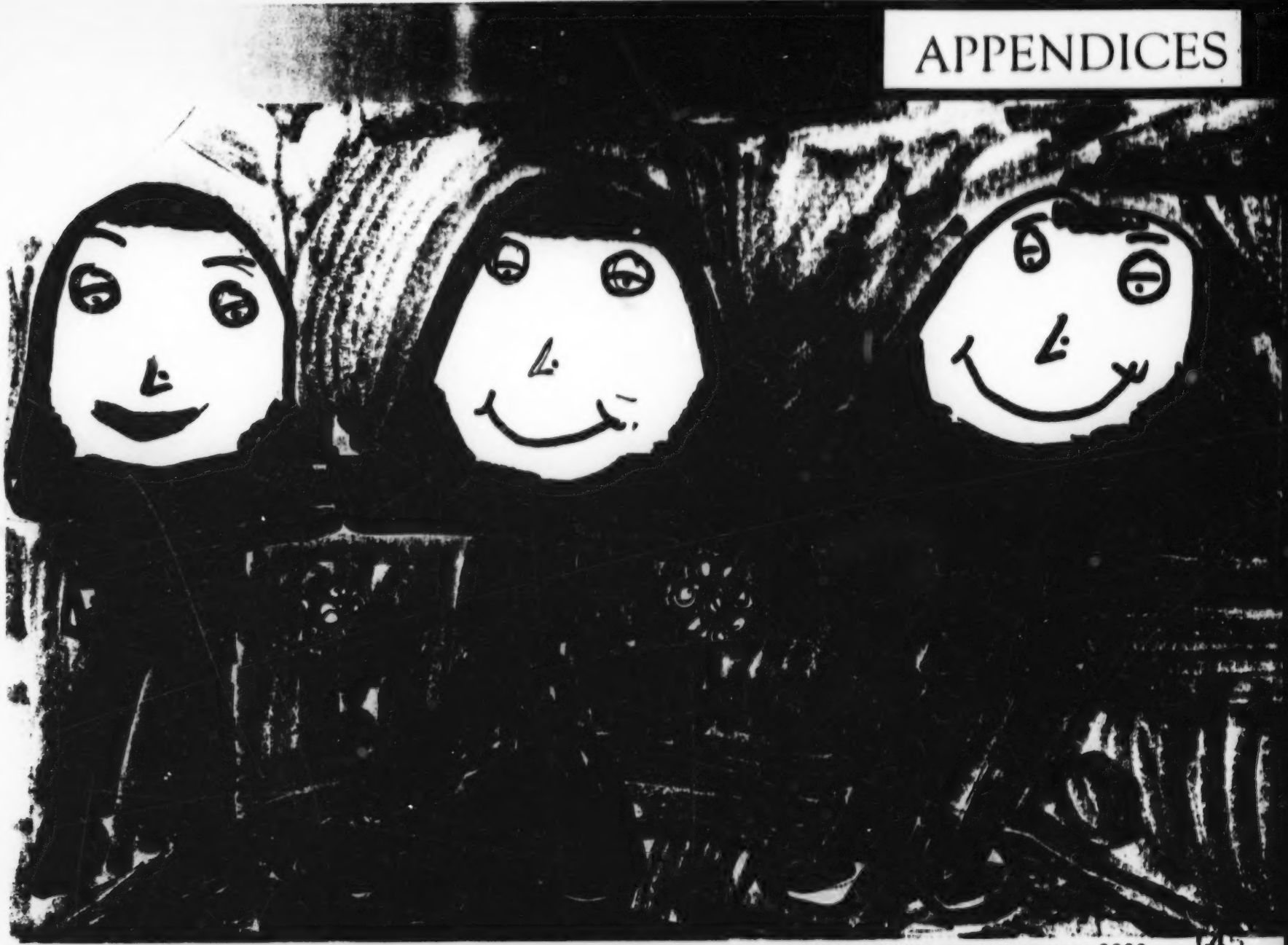
[26] Data for this section was obtained from 4 issues in the series: *An Informational Study: New Hampshire Public High School Graduates*, published by the New Hampshire Department of Education from July 1996 through June 1999.

[27] Lin-Wood (40% to 75%), Portsmouth (46% to 62%), Pelham (41% to 58%) Wilton-Lyndeborough (43% to 53%), Lisbon (42% to 52%), Coe-Brown-Northwood (35% to 51%), Woodsville (37% to 47%), Colebrook (32% to 43%), Hillsboro-Deering (29% to 39%), Pittsburg (22% to 38%), Raymond (22% to 38%), and Stratford (18% to 32%).

[28] Alton (from 65% to 76%), Franklin (51% to 67%), Groveton (55% to 66%), Stevens High School (51% to 65%), Merrimack Valley (48% to 65%), Nute High School (47% to 61%), Somersworth (43% to 55%), and Raymond (40% to 52%).

[29] A table listing the post high school education plans of graduating seniors for all high schools, listed by economic cluster, is available on our web site.

APPENDICES



Appendix A

New Hampshire

Background Information

Demographic Change

Race/Ethnicity of Children 1997-2005

	1997	2005	% CHANGE
Total	296,100	303,500	2%
White*	284,100	288,700	2%
Black*	1,900	2,300	21%
Hispanic	5,800	7,000	21%
Asian and Pacific Islander*	3,700	4,800	30%
Native American*	600	700	17%

*Non-Hispanic

Child Health

	1990/91	1995/96	% CHANGE
Percent of teen births occurring to mothers who smoked	37%	35%	-5%

	1995	1996	% CHANGE
Percent of births covered by Medicaid	21%	N.A.	N.A.

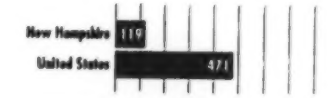
Social and Economic Characteristics

	STATE	NATIONAL
Percent of 2-year-olds who were immunized: 1997	85%	78%
Percent of 4th grade students who scored below basic reading level: 1998	25%	39%
Percent of 8th grade students who scored below basic reading level: 1998	N.A.	28%
Median income of families with children: 1996	$45,000	$39,700
Percent of female-headed families receiving child support or alimony: 1996	44%	34%
Percent of children in extreme poverty (income below 50% of poverty level): 1996	5%	9%

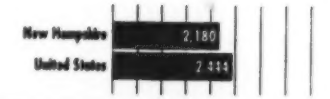
	STATE	NATIONAL
Percent of children without health insurance: 1996	10%	14%
Percent of children covered by Medicaid or other public-sector health insurance: 1996	17%	25%

Juvenile Justice

Juvenile violent crime arrest rate (arrests per 100,000 youths ages 10-17): 1996



Juvenile property crime arrest rate (arrests per 100,000 youths ages 10-17): 1996

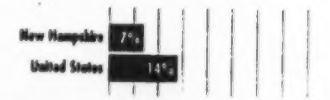


Family Risk Index

Children living in families with four or more of the following characteristics are considered at "high risk":

- Child is not living with two parents
- Household head is high school dropout
- Family income is below the poverty line
- Child is living with parent(s) who do not have steady, full-time employment
- Family is receiving welfare benefits
- Child does not have health insurance

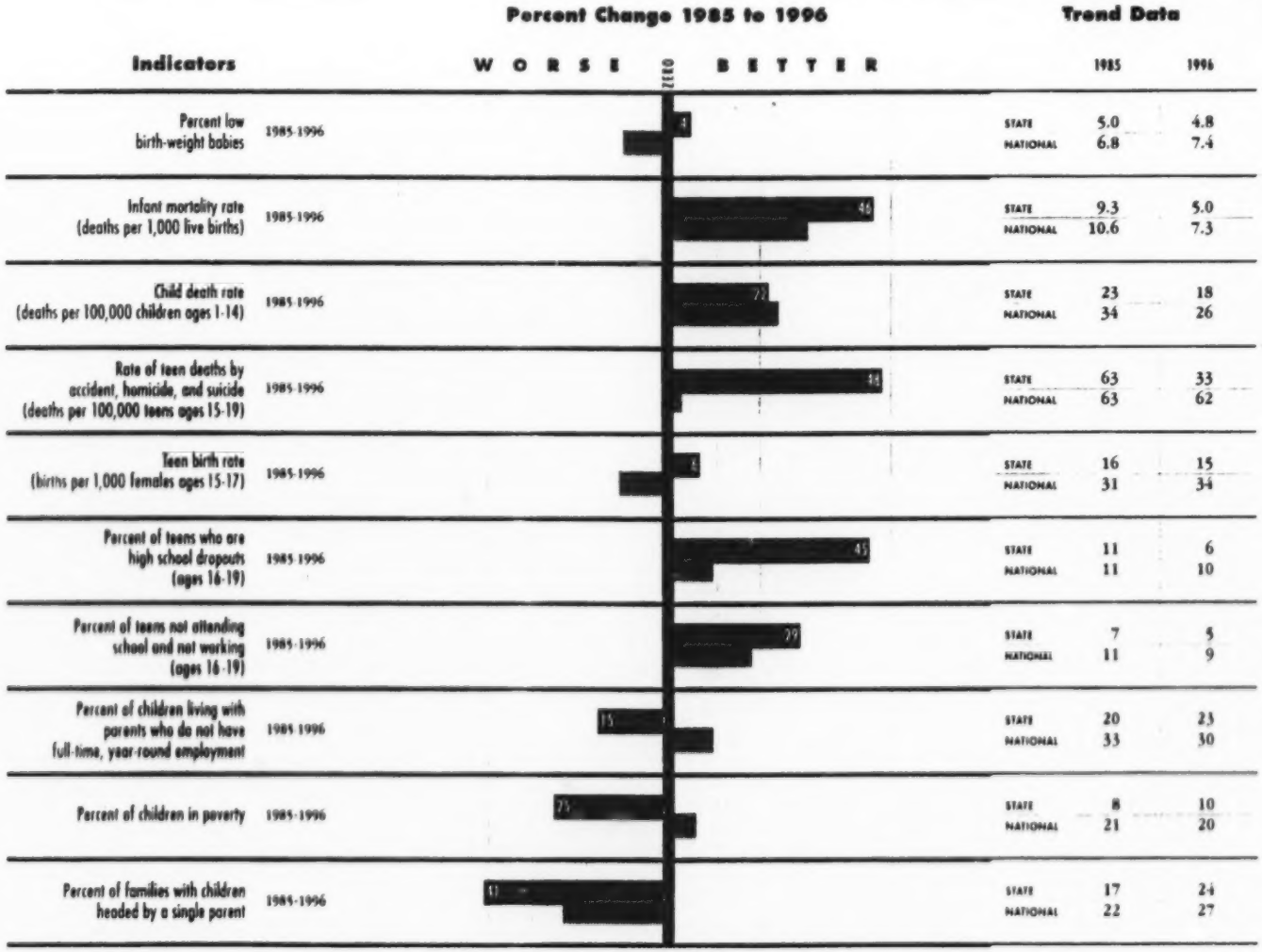
Percent of children living in "high-risk" families, based on definition above: 1996



N.A. = Not Available

New Hampshire

National Composite Rank [1]



■ Patterned bars indicate national change. ■ Solid bars indicate state change.

Appendix B

KIDS COUNT New Hampshire Economic Clusters

150

251

Appendix B

Wealthiest Cluster 1

Amherst (194)
Atkinson (233)
Auburn (162)
Bedford (196)
Bow (157)
Candia (161)
Canterbury (119)
E.Kingston (205)
Francestown (153)
Goffstown (155)
Hamptstead (200)
HamptonFalls (208)
Hancock (149)
Hanover (61)
Hollis (227)
Hooksett (159)
Hopkinton (134)
Hudson (229)
Kingston (203)
Lee (173)
Litchfield (197)
Londonderry (198)
Mason (224)
Merrimack (195)
New Boston (192)
New Castle (180)
Newbury (105)
Newfields (171)
Newington (175)
Newton (204)
No. Hampton (211)
Pelham (230)
Rye (179)
Salem (232)
Sandown (201)
Stratham (176)
Waterville
Valley (40)
Windham (231)

Wealthier Cluster 2

Brentwood(169)
Brookfield (84)
Ctr. Harbor (68)
Chester (163)
Chichester (137)
Danville (202)
Dublin (188)
Dunbarton (156)
Exeter (170)
Fremont (168)
Gilford (82)
Grantham (87)
Greenland (177)
Henniker (133)
Kensington (207)
Lyndeborough (191)
Madbury (141)
Milford (225)
Mont Vernon (193)
Nashua (228)
New London (102)
Nottingham (166)
Pembroke (136)
Peterborough (189)
Plainfield (86)
Plaistow (234)
Randolph (17)
Rollinsford (144)
Sharon (219)
So. Hampton (207)
Surry (145)
Sutton (106)
Warner (116)
Weare (154)
Webster (117)

Middle Cluster 3

Allenstown (160)
Alton (95)
Andover (90)
Bradford (115)
Chesterfield (182)
Clarksville (2)
Concord (135)
Cornish (99)
Croydon (100)
Danbury (75)
Deerfield (164)
Dover (142)
Durham (174)
Easton (32)
Eaton (53)
Enfield (73)
Epping (167)
Epsom (138)
Fitzwilliam (216)
Freedom (60)
Gilmanton (94)
Greenfield (190)
Hampton (210)
Harrisville (187)
Hebron (65)
Hillsborough (132)
Holderness (58)
Jackson (28)
Jaffrey (217)
Keene (183)
Langdon (126)
Lebanon (72)
Loudon (120)
Monroe (23)
Nelson (148)
New Hampton (78)
New Ipswich (221)
Newmarket (172)
Northfield (108)
Northwood (139)
Orange (63)
Raymond (165)
Richmond (214)
Rindge (218)
Roxbury (185)
Salisbury (107)
Sandwich (50)
Shelburne (19)
Strafford (123)
Sugar Hill (26)
Temple (220)
Westmoreland (181)
Wilmot (89)
Wilton (222)

Poorer Cluster 4

Acworth (111)
Barrington (140)
Belmont (93)
Bridgewater (66)
Deering (152)
Franconia (27)
Gilsum (146)
Landaff (31)
Madison (52)
Manchester (158)
Marlborough (186)
Meredith (80)
Middleton (97)
Milton (98)
New Durham (96)
Portsmouth (178)
Rochester (125)
Sanbornton (79)
Seabrook (209)
Somersworth (143)
Stoddard (130)
Sullivan (147)
Sunapee (101)
Walpole (127)
Wolfeboro (83)

Poorest Cluster 5

Albany (41)
Alexandria (64)
Alstead (128)
Antrim (150)
Ashland (67)
Barnstead (122)
Bartlett (35)
Bath (30)
Bennington (151)
Benton (38)
Berlin (13)
Bethlehem (21)
Boscawen (118)
Bristol (77)
Campton (49)
Canaan (62)
Carroll (22)
Charlestown (109)
Chatham (29)
Claremont (103)
Colebrook (4)
Columbia (5)
Conway (36)
Dalton (14)
Danbury (75)
Dorchester (55)
Dummer (10)
Effingham (71)
Ellsworth (44)
Erroll (7)
Farmington (124)
Franklin (91)
Gorham (18)
Goshen (113)
Grafton (74)
Groton (56)
Haverhill (37)
Hill (76)
Hinsdale (212)
Jefferson (16)
Laconia (81)
Lancaster (12)
Lempster (112)
Lincoln (33)
Lisbon (25)
Littleton (20)
Lyman (24)
Marlow (129)
Milan (11)
Moultonboro (59)
Newport (104)
Northumberland (8)
Orford (46)
Ossipee (70)
Piermont (42)
Pittsburg (1)
Pittsfield (121)
Plymouth (57)
Rumney (48)
Springfield (88)
Stark (9)
Stewartstown (3)
Tamworth (51)
Thornton (45)
Tilton (92)
Troy (215)
Tuftonboro (69)
Unity (110)
Wakefield (85)
Warren (43)
Washington (114)
Wentworth (47)
Whitefield (15)
Winchester (213)
Windsor (131)
Woodstock (39)

Appendix C

Appendix C High School Clusters

For purposes of the analysis in Chapter Five, each school district is assigned to one of the five economic clusters. While such assignment was relatively straightforward at the elementary school level, it was more complicated at the high school level because many New Hampshire high schools serve multiple municipalities, either through cooperative and regional school districts or through contractual relationships between neighboring school districts.

We used information from the Department of Education to determine what high schools serve students from what towns. We then assigned each high school to one of five clusters based on the economic clusters of the towns it serves. For a high school that serves only one town (e.g., Nashua High School), the school was assigned to the same cluster as its town. For a high school that services multiple towns, all of which are in the same town cluster (e.g., Colebrook High School serving Colebrook, Columbia, and Errol), the school was assigned to the same cluster as its towns. For a high school that serves multiple towns that are in different town clusters, the school was assigned to a cluster based on the weighted average number of children (1990 census) from each town. For example, Gilford High School serves students from Gilford (a cluster 2 town with 1,411 children) and Gilmanton (a cluster 3 town with 776 children.) The weighted average resulted in Gilford High School being assigned to cluster 2. This results in some high schools being assigned to an economic cluster that is different from the town in which they are physically situated. This is reasonable because the school cluster is meant to be a rough measure of the economic conditions in the communities of the student body as a whole. For example, Mascoma High School is assigned to cluster 4, even though Canaan, where it is located, is a cluster 5 town and the other five towns it serves are either in cluster 3 or cluster 5.
The high schools are grouped by their assigned economic clusters in the following table.

High Schools Grouped by Economic Cluster

Cluster One

School District	High School Name
Bow	Bow High School
Dresden	Hanover High School
Goffstown	Goffstown Area High School
Hollis/Brookline Cooperative	Hollis/Brookline High School
Hopkinton	Hopkinton High School
Hudson	Alvirne High School
Londonderry	Londonderry Senior High School
Merrimack	Merrimack High School
Pelham	Pelham High School
Salem	Salem High School
Sanborn Regional	Sanborn Regional High School
Souhegan Cooperative	Souhegan Cooperative High School
Timberlane Regional	Timberlane Regional High School

Cluster Two

School District	High School Name
Derry	Pinkerton Academy
Exeter	Exeter High School
Gilford	Gilford High School
John Stark Regional	John Stark Regional High School
Kearsage Regional	Kearsage Regional High School
Milford	Milford High School
Nashua	Nashua High School
Oyster River Coop	Oyster River High School
Pembroke	Pembroke Academy

Appendix C

Cluster Three

School District	High School Name
Alton	Alton Central High School
Concord	Concord Senior High School
Contoocook Valley	Conval Regional High School
Dover	Dover Senior High School
Epping	Epping High School
Hillsboro-Deering Coop	Hillsboro-Deering High School
Jaffrey-Rindge Coop	Conant High School
Keene	Keene High School
Lebanon	Lebanon High School
Manchester	Manchester Central High School
Manchester	Manchester Memorial High School
Manchester	Manchester West High School
Mascenic Regional	Mascenic Regional High School
Merrimack Valley	Merrimack Valley High School
Newmarket	Newmarket Jr/Sr High School
Northwood	Coe-Brown Northwood Academy
Portsmouth	Portsmouth High School
Raymond	Raymond High School
Shaker Regional	Belmont High School
Wilton-Lyndeboro	Wilton-Lyndeboro Senior High School
Winnacunnet Coop	Winnacunnet High School

Cluster Four

School District	High School Name
Gov. Wentworth Regional.	Kingswood Regional High School
Interlakes	Interlakes High School
Mascoma Valley Regional	Mascoma Valley High School
Milton	Nute High School
Monadnock Regional	Monadnock Regional High School
Newfound Area	Newfound Regional High Schooll
Profile	Profile Jr/Sr High School
Rochester	Spaulding High School
Somersworth	Somersworth High School
Sunapee	Sunapee Senior High School
Winnisquam Regional	Winnisquam Regional High School

Cluster Five

School District	High School Name
Berlin	Berlin Senior High School
Claremont	Stevens High School
Colebrook	Colebrook Academy
Conway	A Crosby Kennett Senior High School
Fall Mountain Regional	Fall Mountain Regional High School
Farmington	Farmington Senior High School
Franklin	Franklin High School
Gorham	Gorham High School
Haverhill Coop	Woodsville High School
Hinsdale	Hinsdale Senior High School
Laconia	Laconia High School
Lincoln-Woodstock	Lin-Wood Public High School
Lisbon Regional	Lisbon Regional High School
Littleton	Littleton High School
Moultonborough	Moultonborough Academy
Newport	Newport Senior High School
Northumberland	Groveton High School
Orford	Orford High School
Pemi-Baker Regional	Plymouth Regional High School
Pittsburg	Pittsburg High School
Pittsfield	Pittsfield High School
Stratford	Stratford Public High School
White Mountain Regional	White Mountain Regional High School
Winchester	Thayer High School

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